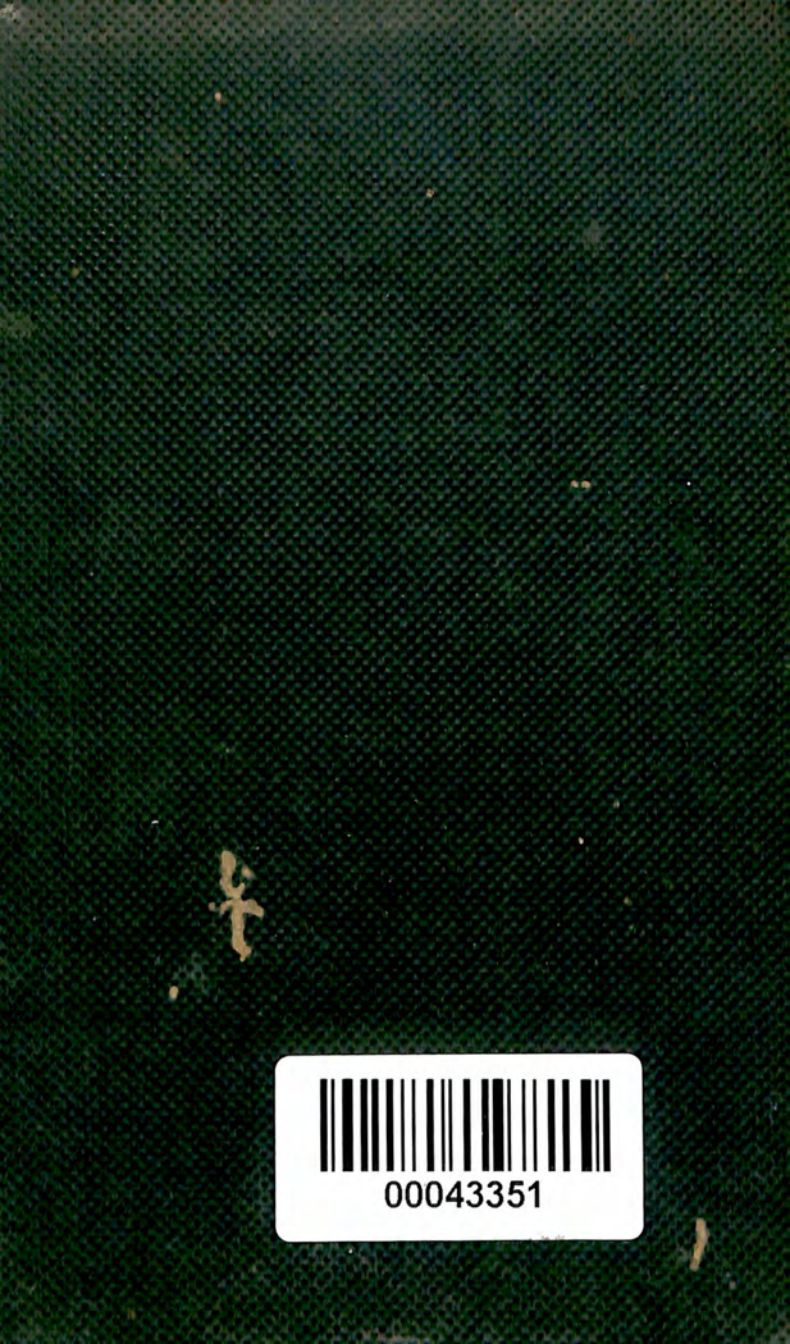

00043351

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.
CLASS

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016

THE TOMB OF FRAUENLOB.

One of the last of Minnesingers. at Mentz.

See p. 305.

London Published by Longman & C. May 1818

LAYS

OF

THE MINNESINGERS

OR

GERMAN TROUBADOURS

OF THE

TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES:

ILLUSTRATED BY SPECIMENS OF THE COTEMPORARY LYRIC POETRY OF PROVENCE AND OTHER PARTS OF EUROPE:

WITH HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES, AND ENGRAVINGS FROM THE MS. OF THE MINNESINGERS IN THE KING'S LIBRARY AT PARIS, AND FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"There was once a gentle time,
When the world was in its prime,
When every day was holiday,
And every month was lovely May."—*Croly.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, BROWN AND GREEN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1825.

43351

43351

PRINTED BY RICHARD TAYLOR,
SHOE-LANE, LONDON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THOUGH this little work is sent into the world anonymously, it may be proper to state that it is the joint production of two authors: one of whom (the writer of this notice) is answerable for the arrangement, and for what may be called the critical department of the book; while he resigns the poetic department, with few and trifling exceptions, to his associate, to whom the reader will correctly attribute whatever is most worthy of his perusal.

The selections have been almost entirely confined to that branch of lyric poetry by which the period in question is most peculiarly characterized. It must, however, be admitted, that a much more curious and valuable miscellany might be compiled from a careful investigation of the great mass of those pieces, belonging to the same æra, which are of an historical character.

The opportunity cannot be omitted of expressing an earnest wish that the vast mass of information which may now be drawn from the copious stores of Germany, for the elucidation and illustration of the poetry and romance of the middle ages, will, before long, give rise to some new and more comprehensive work on that subject:—at all events, we ought not to be without a complete literary history of the Suabian age.

An apology is perhaps due for the paucity of references to authorities throughout this volume: but it should be remembered, that they are generally drawn from the German critics, whose works are well known to those who have cultivated similar pursuits in that language, and whom it would be of little use to quote for the mere English reader.

The specimens of the Minnesingers (which word it may be as well to state once for all, means *love-singers*) are almost all taken from Bodmer; and those of the Troubadours, either from M. Raynouard or from the Parnasse Occitanien.

PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

And as I maie I speke amonge,
And other while I synge a songe.

GOWER's *Confess.*

ON

THE AGE AND POETRY

OF THE

MINNESINGERS, TROUBADOURS,

&c.

SECTION I.

Introductory remarks.—Provence.—Imperfect knowledge of the works of the Troubadours.—Writers on the subject.—M. Raynouard.—Early monuments of Provençal poetry.—Its cultivation.—Decline of the art in the South.—Ascendancy of the North-French dialect or Romance.—Character of the Troubadours to be sought in their works.—Remarks on the question, whether the Troubadours confined themselves to lyric poetry, or like the Northern poets also composed Romances and Tales.—Remains of Provençal Romances and Tales.—Real extent of the literary productions of the Troubadours now uncertain.

THOUGH it is perhaps necessary to introduce the following selections by a few observations on the period of history which they serve in some measure to illustrate, and on the early poetic literature of the

different countries to which they belong, it is not meant to attempt learned disquisitions on obscure subjects, which the author has neither opportunity nor information sufficient to enable him to fathom. The object of this volume is merely to exhibit some specimens of the early lyric poets of Germany, illustrated at the same time by a few selections from the Troubadour schools of other countries, so as to enable the reader to form some judgement of their comparative merits and influence on the poetic literature of modern Europe.

The selections are offered with diffidence, as the result of hours rather of amusement and leisure from graver pursuits than of laborious research. Strictly speaking, the field belongs to the professed antiquary; and to him it may be thought should properly be left the exposition of its objects of interest and curiosity: but a casual wanderer may be suffered sometimes to enter the appropriated ground; and if he pluck a few of its wild flowers by the way, and venture yet further (in the absence of more experienced guides) to point out their beauties and talk of the scenes in which they grew and flourished, who will altogether condemn him?

The middle ages have never appeared to the author to be "a blank in the history of the human mind," or a period of which it may with truth be said, that art and science had perished "that their resurrection might

appear something more wonderful and sublime." We cannot take one step in the examination of the feelings, customs and literature of that singular epoch, which will not add somewhat to the ardour of our curiosity, and fill us with a deeper interest in the march of that intellect in whose fashionless beginnings we trace the elements of a new and nobler frame of society. This period stands indeed as a mighty barrier between two worlds: the social and political institutions of the old were falling into decay, and the new was putting forth the vigorous shoots of opening promise; the inventive genius of man was every where expanding; Rome and Greece had sunk into second childhood, while barbarians were training up to firm and intellectual manhood.

In contemplating the manners and early institutions of these new actors on the stage of human affairs abstractedly, we may see much to disapprove and little to applaud; yet the most questionable of their policies have ripened into results so unexpectedly beneficial as to make even the deformities of their infancy interesting. The shades of the picture of society are dark and often revolting; but its lights are bright, and beam a cheering and reviving influence.

The wholesome animating influence of the Gothic tribes upon European literature, intellect and policy is every where apparent. Under Theodoric appeared the opening of a healthful system, though it was

for a time retarded by the renewed ascendancy of the slothful empire of the East. When the lights of knowledge again appeared, they were found in the remote regions of the North, in the cloisters of Ireland and Scotland. The Saxons speedily caught the spirit of inquiry, and from them it found its way to France and Germany, where the noble example of another Teutonic monarch, Charlemagne, roused a creative national genius, which manifested itself in the cultivation of the vernacular language in preference to a corrupted Latin. With him must be ranked the glory of our own land, the great and virtuous Alfred, the proper father of English literature. From the time of these worthies we may date a steady progress in the formation of the modern languages, and their gradual adaptation to the purposes of a new school of literature.

The 11th, 12th and 13th centuries form a great period of fermentation, during which the elements of European civilization were separating and fashioning themselves for the reception of new forms. Principles were yet crude and indigested, but feeling was every where strong. The fervour of religious zeal often misled the mind and inflamed the passions; yet we should not forget that this religion was the medium of civilization, the guardian angel that watched over the walls of the sanctuaries of learning, shielding them from the devastations of ignorant and lawless power.

The wild dreams of chivalry outraged common sense; yet in an age when might would have been right, it turned the arm of power itself into a protection for the defenceless*, controlled those for whom there was as yet no other law, and mellowed in the process of time into that principle of honourable courtesy which forms the ornament and cement of modern society. The servile worship of the female sex may raise a smile, and the solemn manner in which this "prostration of the understanding and the will" was carried on may excite a momentary feeling of contempt; yet this was the beginning of that important revolution in society, which, however extravagant in its commencement, fixed on the firm basis of religious justice the destinies of one half of the human race. We may laugh at the whimsical folly which

* A good picture of a character formed on chivalric principles is drawn by Herbers, a poet of the 13th century, in Dolopatos:

Onkes ne trouva en sa vie
Son pareil de chevalerie;
Les uns par armes sorprenoit,
Les autres par dons qu'il donoit,
Les autres par belles paroles;
C'est un ars ki maint home afole.
As pauvres gens qui le doutoient
Et qui a lui sougiet estoient,
Estoit si dous et debonere
Com s'il nul mal ne seust fere;
Plus fu lor pere que lor sire
Ce puis-je bien par raison dire.

suddenly transformed women from slaves into goddesses, mighty to save and omnipotent to destroy; but the fetters which kings, emperors and warriors thus voluntarily forged for themselves held them in no ungentle thraldom: they felt themselves tamed and humanized they knew not how or why; they were taught to respect one another, and thus they gradually learnt to respect themselves. Public opinion now came to be regarded as of importance, and even Courts of love may in this view have had a beneficial operation; for any thing was good that raised a countervailing power to curb the injustice of the strong, and bring mankind within the control of social regulations and conventional discipline. A writer of Sirventes, who acted honestly and fearlessly up to the impartial principle laid down by the Troubadour Pons Barba,

> Sirventes no es leials,
> S'om no i ausa dir los mals
> Dels menors e dels comunals,
> E maiorment dels maiorals:

must have been a powerful agent upon society for the production of good, in days when poetry exercised so strong an influence. The conduct of the politic emperors of Germany in encouraging it as a counterpoise to the encroachments of ignorant superstition and of papal enthralment, will show the value they attached to that influence; and the resistance from

public opinion, which was the actual moral result, will convince any inquirer into the history of the age how important was the agency so put in operation.

All the elements of society were thus, to a certain extent, drawn together by an uniting sympathy, and by a common zeal in the promotion of objects, which could not but tend in some degree to temper their asperities. The kings of nations, the aristocracy, and the people, were united in emulation in the field, and the inequalities of rank were still further mitigated by the value set upon poetic talent, by whomsoever displayed. The East opened its wonders, the world was enchanted, and history became a romance. It was the spring time of the mind, "the season of unfolding intellect and mental blossoming;"

> "Love, now an universal birth,
> From heart to heart was stealing,
> From earth to man, from man to earth,
> It was the hour of feeling."

The heart of man was bolder, his arm firmer, than in the days of dull reality, and the spirit of adventurous knighthood was softened into heroic gentleness and gallant love. The beauty of woman became a boast and a treasure, and the "mortal mixture of earth's mould" was worshipped as a starry divinity. And then surely was the fit hour of blooming for "the crowning rose of all the wreath," that poetic spirit which tended so much to rub off the rust, and refine

away the accumulated barbarism of ages, to stir up the spirit to emulation, and to prepare the way for better things, when better things should come. The fountains of pure and gentle feelings, which were destined to spread refinement and civilization over the world, were at any rate opened.

The chivalry and the poetry of these ages are inseparably connected. They are the fruits of one great moral revolution; they sprung up together, and are mutually illustrative of each other; they have similar blemishes and similar redeeming qualities; and where so much has been said about the one, it cannot be uninteresting to exhibit a few specimens of the other.

In this poetry we have the best illustration of the state of society to which it owed its birth; of that striking mixture of strong feelings, religious associations, and metaphysical gallantry, which clothed the object of the poet's adoration with the form of angels; made her eyes the stars in which man was to read his destinies; opened a heaven to the happy lover; and made the woods, the plains, the rivers and the flowers, the witnesses and partners of his joy. With what tender gaiety opens the song of the Troubadour Arnaud de Marveil;

Oh! how sweet the breeze of April,
Breathing soft as May draws near!
While thro' nights of tranquil beauty,
Songs of sweetness meet the ear;

Every bird his well-known language
Uttering in the morning's pride,
Revelling in joy and gladness
By his happy partner's side.
Then when all around is smiling,
When to life the young birds spring,
Thoughts of love I cannot hinder,
Come my heart inspiriting, &c.

What frolic jollity revels in the song of the old Minnesinger Earl Conrad of Kirchberg, when he calls the gay circles, on the return of May, to go forth

. . . . . and see
All her stores of jollity!
O'er the laughing hedgerow's side
She hath spread her treasures wide;
She is in the greenwood shade,
Where the nightingale hath made
Every branch and every tree
Ring with her sweet melody;
Hill and dale are May's own treasures,
Youth rejoice in sportive measures!
Sing ye! join the chorus gay,
Hail this merry, merry May!

The coincidence in tone between the society and the poetry of the age, is also observable in the whimsical institutions to which the reigning passion for gallantry gave birth. "La société, jeune encore, (as the entertaining author of "De l'Amour," Paris 1822, observes,) se plaisait dans les formalités et les cérémonies qui alors montraient la civilization, et qui aujourd'hui feraient mourir d'ennui. Le même caractère se retrouve dans la langue des Provençaux, dans

la difficulté et l'entrelacement de leurs rimes, dans leur mots masculins et féminins pour exprimer le même objet, enfin dans le nombre infini de leur poëtes. Tout ce qui est *forme* dans la société, et qui aujourd'hui est si insipide, avait alors toute la fraicheur et la saveur de la noveauté."

In the same period is to be observed the groundwork of the striking distinctions which mark the school of modern poetry, as opposed to the ancient or classic. The latter had in every respect an essentially masculine character: even in its tenderest effusions woman was treated only as subservient to the caprices and pleasures of a nobler sex. Our poetry, on the contrary, owes much of its charms to the gentler character which the different position of woman in society has necessarily infused into it. In the early ages the new feeling was wildly and extravagantly pursued: but in modern times its spirit is subdued, and it has subsided into those quieter pictures of social affection, of which classic literature contained little or nothing.

The poetry of the Troubadours has seldom been impartially dealt with, even by the very few who have sought it in the originals. The public will judge whether they ought to be dismissed with such sweeping indiscriminate obloquy as is often heaped upon them, by critics, who pretend at the same time to be in ecstasies with the rimes of Petrarch and his imitators. The German Minnesingers [love-singers], the cotem-

poraries of the Troubadours, are now for the first time introduced to the English reader, and must surely often succeed in winning their way to the hearts of those who are glad to recognise any where the poetry of nature and feeling.

To one objection, indeed, the charge of uniformity and want of variety, they are from their very nature subject; but on that head their eloquent countryman F. Schlegel must be suffered to plead their excuse: "The reproach of uniformity seems to be a very singular one: it is as if we should condemn the spring or a garden for the multitude of its flowers. It is perhaps true enough that ornaments of many kinds are more delightful when they occur singly than when we see them gathered together in masses. Laura herself could scarcely have read her own praises without wearisomeness, had she been presented at any one time with all the verses which Petrarch composed upon her during the period of her life. The impression of uniformity arises from our seeing these poems bound together into large collections, a fate which was probably neither the design nor the hope of those who composed them. But in truth, not only love songs but all lyric poems, if they are really true to nature and aim at nothing more than the expression of individual feelings, must necessarily be confined within a very narrow range, both of thought and sentiment. Of this we find many examples in

the high species of lyrical poetry among all nations. Feeling must occupy the first place wherever it is to be powerfully and poetically represented; and when feeling is predominant, variety and richness of thought are always things of very secondary importance. The truth is, that great variety in lyric poetry is never to be found, except in those ages of imitation when men are fond of treating of all manner of subjects in all manner of forms. Then indeed we often find the tone and taste of twenty different ages and nations brought together within the same collection, and observe that the popularity of the poet is increased in proportion as he descends from his proper dignity."

The poetry of the German Minnesingers is the main object of this volume, and of course of these introductory remarks; yet in reviewing the intimate connection between the early efforts of modern poetry in different countries, the subject seems properly to open with the Troubadours of Southern France, or Provence, in the widest sense of the word, which strictly speaking however includes only a small part of this land of song.

It cannot be said that the history or literature of these minstrels (who certainly take the lead in point of time in

that art which so quickly diffused itself over Europe) has been neglected; on the contrary, no theme has been more laboriously handled, and yet the true materials for judging their character, which have hitherto been laid before the public, are exceedingly scanty. M. Schlegel very justly observes, "Tout le monde parlait des Troubadours et personne ne les connaissait." Abundance of treatises were written, and elaborate judgements pronounced, while scarcely an author thought it necessary to produce his evidence, and enable his readers to exercise their own judgement. Unfortunately the majority of French critics appear to entertain a sovereign contempt for every thing which is not in the court dress of Louis XIV., and are content to let the fine language of their ancestors rest in cheerless oblivion. All, and particularly Millot, seem studiously to keep the originals in the back ground; it is difficult to say why, unless it were felt to be most prudent to deny to the world the means of judging of the competency or fidelity of the alledged translations. Those who will take the pains to examine them will often see that this precaution was by no means impolitic.

Even M. Ginguené and M. Sismondi appear to be satisfied with conclusions drawn at second hand from the works of Millot, scarcely ever venture on a translation of their own, and furnish only here and there an original fragment, selected with no view to the

illustration of the poetic talent or taste of the school whose works are under consideration, but picked up at random, as a mere specimen of the language or the structure of a verse; and certainly neither of them seems duly sensible of the beauty and force of the fine language which has so unfortunately perished. It is too much to ask us to be contented with an elaborate judgement on the merits of Provençal poetry, prefaced by an author's admission that he has read little or nothing of it, that it is contained in MSS. which he cannot or has not chosen to read, and that his acquaintance with it is almost exclusively through the medium of the Abbé Millot*.

Much remained to be said and learned, and M. Raynouard has at last (in his Recueil des Poesies des Troubadours, 6 vols.) amply supplied the deficiency, particularly in the careful reprint of originals and the formation of a grammar of the language. In this elaborate work the early monuments of the Provençal language and poetry may be found, collected with diligence, and published with taste and critical

* M. Sismondi, in his second edition, has considerably enlarged and improved his notice of the Troubadours, as well as altered the tone of his observations, having availed himself of the intervening publication of M. Raynouard's first volume. Mr. T. Roscoe's elegant translation has added incalculably to the value of his author, by the addition of the original pieces, which M. Sismondi knew only from Millot's translations, or rather parodies.

accuracy. Much has doubtless perished; for the polished style and metrical symmetry of the songs of the earliest known lyric poet, William IX. count of Poictiers, who was born in 1070 and died in 1126, render it hardly probable that a new dialect should at once have started into so perfect and regular a form. But enough has survived to enable the reader to form for himself a correct estimate of the talents and influence of the Troubadour school; and an exceedingly interesting stock of historic materials is laid open to future investigators, often of far higher value than the dry labours of professed chroniclers.

The gay smiling climate of the South of France seemed to combine with the superiority and freedom of its political institutions * to call forth the earliest fruits of chivalry and its attendant song. During the greater part of the 10th century, while Northern France was a prey to intestine commotions, Provence and part of Burgundy and its dependencies

* "Dans le moyen âge," says Papon (Hist. Gen. de Provence, t. 2, p. 208), "il y avoit plus de personnes libres en Provence, que dans aucune autre province, et les revolutions de la Monarchie s'y etant fait beaucoup moins sentir, nos villes durent conserver leur administration municipale: si les malheurs du temps y apporterent quelque interruption, elles en reprirent elles-memes la jouissance, sans que l'autorité du Prince intervint. Elles avoient, dès le commencement du douzième siecle, une forme du gouvernement, qui ressembloit à celle que les Romains leur avoient donné."

had enjoyed repose under the mild rule of Conrad the Pacific. Perhaps we may even look higher up, and trace the superior civilization of some of the Southern states to the influence of the laws of the Burgundians, which certainly formed the most equitable and mild of the codes established on the basis of Roman jurisprudence. The courts of the Berengars, the sovereigns of Catalonia and part of Southern France, became the principal nurseries of the opening talent, and the centre of union with other European nations. The period of their power embraces the whole bloom of Provençal literature, and their patronage of it every where stimulated the foreign courts, with which they were connected, to the cultivation of similar pursuits.

But the once brilliant literature, and even the language, of the South of France was doomed to oblivion and neglect. Its most beautiful regions became the scene of bigoted devastation during the bloody wars against the Albigenses. The poets had never been friends of the church; many of the last efforts of Troubadour song were exerted in vindicating the rights of humanity against the cruelty and corruption of Rome and its retainers; and it is singular also that some of the earliest remains of the poetry of this dialect collected by M. Raynouard are those of the heretic Vaudois or Waldenses. "Avez vous vu" (says the author of 'De l'Amour,' before quoted) "à l'opéra la

finale d'un bel opéra comique? Tout est gaieté, magnificence idéale sur la scène. Nous sommes à mille lieues des vilains côtés de la nature humaine. L'opéra finit, la toile tombe, les spectateurs s'en vont, le lustre s'élève, on éteint les quinquets. L'odeur de lampe maléteinte remplit la salle, le rideau se relève à moitié, l'on aperçoit les polissons sales se démener sur la scène ; ils s'y agitent d'une manière hideuse, ils y tiennent la place des jeunes femmes qui la remplissaient de leurs grâces il n'y a qu'un instant.

" Tel fut pour la royaume de Provence l'effet de la conquête de Toulouse par l'armée des Croisés. Au lieu d'amour, de grâces et de gaieté, on eut les Barbares du Nord et Saint Dominique. Quant aux barbares, c'étaient nos pères ; ils tuaient et saccagaient tout; ils détruisaient pour le plaisir de détruire ce qu'ils ne pouvaient emporter ; une rage sauvage les animait contre tout ce qui portait quelque trace de civilisation ; surtout ils n'entendaient pas un mot de cette belle langue du midi, et leur fureur en était redoublée. Tout fut fini pour les Provençaux ; plus d'amour, plus de gaieté, plus de poésie ; moins de vingt ans après la conquête ils étaient presque aussi barbares et aussi grossiers que les Francais—que nos pères."

The southern provinces lost their independence, and were one by one annexed to the crown of France. With the princes and princesses, nobles and knights of Provence, its poets also vanished, or carried their

gaiety and gallantry to the rising courts of Naples and Sicily; the romantic tales of chivalry and the gay fabliaux, which appeared in the court dialect of the Norman princes, became the popular favourites; princes and nobles ceased to sing, or adopted, like Thibaut king of Navarre, the more fashionable dialect; and the Provençal muse expired, or lived only in the lingering efforts of some poor minstrel, compelled (to use the words of Albert Marquis de Malespina)

> Anar a pe a ley de croy joglar,
> Pauvre d'aver, e malastrucx d'amiex;
>
> As vagrant juglar doom'd on foot to rove,
> Poor in his purse, and luckless in his love;

till at last it is only left to Nostradamus to lament, that "nostre langue Provensalle s'est tellement avallie et embastardie, que a peine est elle de nous qui sommes du pays entendue."

Several vain attempts were however made in Southern France to rally a spirit which had arisen in a peculiar state of society, and vanished with the circumstances to which it owed its existence. Even so late as 1323 an academy was formed at Toulouse for the cultivation of the Gai Saber; and floral games were instituted, which it is said exist at this day, though the language in which the prizes are contended for is the Northern French. It may be acceptable to some readers to have an opportunity of comparing

the ancient southern tongue with the following specimen of the modern Languedocien spoken at Nismes, which is said to be more harmonious than the dialect of Provence, Cevennes, or even Montpellier. It is a translation of the 37th ode of Anacreon [from "Odes d' Anacréon, traduites en vers Languedociens par Le Cen Aubanel l'ainé—à Nismes, an. 10."], and has more of the Troubadour spirit than of faithfulness to the original.

Tenen la sesoun de l'amour,
Eiço n'en senblo uno aoutro vido,
Lou gai printen es de retour,
Dujà sa grasso es espandido.

L'aiguo es lindo coumo l'arjen ;
L'agralio a gagna la mountanio ;
Vesés lou pouli ver neissen
Que couvris touto la canpanio.

Lou sourel es aou e luzis,
Ven l'escanpilia leis ourages,
Sa presenço leis enclaouzis,
Escoubo touteis leis nuajes.

La tero se couvris de flous,
E leis renouvelo à touto ouro
Leis aoubres chanjou seis colous
L'oulivo nai, la vigno plouro.

L'iroundelo a passa la mar,
A fa soun nis, es in familio ;
Vesés cabussa lou canar,
Entendés l'aoussel que brezilio.

Tou cantejo, tou es counten,
Tou fai l'amour sus nosto tero,
E la vengudo d'aou printen
N'a fa lou peïs de Citero.

The selections in this volume are generally confined to the love-pieces, as illustrative of the songs of the Minnesingers. A complete estimate of the varied character of a Troubadour knight can only be formed by tracing its bold lineaments in his various works; one while breathing the fire of martial glory, animating his followers on to heroic enterprise; another time turning his muse into a powerful political engine, that shook the thrones of kings, or made profligate churchmen tremble in their corrupt hypocrisy, and yet soon afterwards melting into the soft and luxuriant harmony of a chanson.

Such was Bertrand de Born,—restless, ambitious, and impetuous in his counsels,—a faithless friend and a rebellious subject. From his castle of Hautefort he sent forth lyrics which bade defiance to France, England and Spain, while his biting satires excited distrust and divisions among his enemies. At another time he rushed to arms, and carried havoc among the vassals of Philip Augustus, and of Henry II., in whose family he was perpetually sowing discords, and making

> . . . il padre e'l figlio in se ribelli:
> Achitophel non fe piu d' Assalone,
> E di Dauid, co malvaggi punzelli.
>
> DANTE, INF. c. 28.

Among our selections will be found one of the songs with which this extraordinary being stimulated the appetite of his followers for blood and war, in

strains almost as sanguinary as the funeral anthem of Regner Lodbrok: and yet it will be seen in a subsequent specimen that the same fierce spirit could, when it suited him, "turn to words of love," and sigh out a plaintive ditty—a "dolz pleurai"—at the feet of his mistress.

It has been usual to mark a broad line of distinction between the productions of the Northern and Southern schools of early French poetry, between the writers in the Langue d'oeil and the Langue d'oc. The Provençaux are supposed to have confined themselves to their love-lyrics, pastorals, tensons, and sirventes; while the Normans are stated to have devoted themselves as entirely to romances, lais, and fabliaux. Both assumptions are probably equally incorrect; and we shall hereafter see that the Northern school was almost as prolific as the Southern, in what are usually considered as the peculiar characteristics of the latter, though few specimens of this class of Northern poetry have as yet been published: and there is as little doubt that the Provençaux were the authors of very many tales and romances, although hitherto few of such productions have reached us in the Southern language. It is strange indeed that these latter subjects should be supposed never to have been handled by the very class of men who, we are told almost in the same breath, took a prominent part in introducing into Europe (as the spoils of the

Crusades, or the results of their contiguity to the Spanish Arabs,) the splendid ornaments of romantic fiction, the gay tales and fairy imagery of the East.

The most popular or fashionable effusions of the Provençaux seem undoubtedly to have been the lyric and amatory. No where did the courts of love, which M. Raynouard traces up beyond the commencement of the 12th century, obtain such sway as in Provence and Catalonia; and their influence probably directed the talents of the poet to kindred topics. But that the Troubadours neglected the celebration of warlike gests and romantic adventure, or that they abstained from amusing their hearers with tales of fiction, cannot be believed in any sort of consistency with probability or with direct historic testimony. "Il n'y avoit maison noble en Provence," says Nostradamus, "qu'elle n'eust un registre en forme de Romant, auquel estoyent descripts les hauts faicts et gestes de leurs ancestres en langage Provençal." These too have perished, but we do not on that account entertain any doubts of their having once existed.

The tale of the Parroquet, very briefly told by Mr. Dunlop, but now published in the elegant and spirited language of the original by M. Raynouard, and the fabliau "Castia Gilos" of Raymond Vidal, cannot have been singular instances. Several fragments of longer romances survive, and innumerable refe-

rences to others exist in the published poetry of the Troubadours*; and it is not probable that they contented themselves with perusing their favourite works of amusement in a foreign tongue. The beautiful tale of "Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelone" was undoubtedly first written in Provençal by Bernard de Treviez, canon of Maguelone, in the 12th century; and in this form it must have been, that Petrarch "polit et donna des graces nouvelles" to this delightful tale. The French romance is only a version, printed first at Lyons in 1457, and, as the title confesses, *then* "mis en cestui languaige."

Arnaud Daniel, a Troubadour poet, who, in the opinion of Dante,

> . . . versi d'amore e prose de romanzi
> Soverchiò tutti—

* Pierre de Vidal, indeed, expressly mentions the repetition of romances and lays as one of the regular qualifications of a Troubadour joglar,

> E si be m suy aperceubutz
> A son venir que fos joglars;
> Si m volgui saber sos afars
> Per mi meteus, et el me dis;
> 'Senher, ieu soy us homs aclis
> A joglaria de cantar,
> E *say Romans dir e contar:*
> E novas motas e salutz
> Et autres comtes espandutz
> Vas totas partz azautz e bos:
> E d' En Gr. vers e chansos
> E d' En Arnaut de Maruelh mays,
> E d' autres vers, e d'autres lays."

published Lancelot du Lac in his own tongue; for the German translator, in the 13th century, expressly names him as the author whom he followed. Probably the Provençal was the language in which Francesca and Paulo perused this romance in the beautiful story told in the Inferno, c. 5.

> Noi leggiavamo un giorno per diletto
> Di Lancilotto, come amor lo strinse:
> Soli eravamo, e senza alcun sospetto, &c.

Pulci also (c. 27) records Arnaud as a chronicler of the exploits of Rinaldo:

> Dopo costui venne il famoso Arnaldo,
> Che molto diligentemente ha scritto,
> E investigò le opre di Rinaldo
> De le gran cose che fece in Egitto.

Wolfram von Eschenbach, the great German poet of the 13th century, composed two romances,—Parcival and Titurel,—in which he expressly declares that he follows the Provençal of one "Kyot der Provenzal *," and finds fault with Chretien de Troyes, the Norman-French poet, who, he says, falsified the history.

The Lais, or tales drawn from the legends of Brittany, were well known, and formed a constant topic

---

* I have not read these romances of Wolfram von Eschenbach; but M. Schlegel [Observations sur la Langue et la Lit. Provençales. Paris 1818] says that the proper names, from their Provençal form, prove decidedly that he drew from that tongue.

HER WOLFRAN VON ESCHILBACH.

London Published by Longman & Co May 1825.

of delight and amusement to the Provençaux. Thus the bishop Folquet de Marseille, in one of his beautiful songs, says,

Ia no volgra qu'hom auzis
Los doulz chans dels auzellos
Mas cill qui son amoros;
Que res tan no m'esbaudis
Co il auzelet per la planha;
E ilh belha cui son aclis,
Cella m'platz mais que chansos,
Volta, ni lais de Bretanha.

I would not any man should hear
The birds that sweetly sing above,
Save he who knows the power of love;
For nought beside can soothe or cheer
My soul like that sweet harmony,
And her who, yet more sweet and dear,
Hath greater power my soul to move
Than songs or lays of Brittany.

Surely it is not likely that these popular tales were told to the audience in a foreign tongue.

But those who are desirous of maintaining the superiority of the poets of the North will still claim for them the merit of originating these romances and tales, even if similar topics be admitted to have been handled in the Provençal tongue. This may be conceded; but it is perhaps better not to enter too deeply upon these questions here, nor to embark on so doubtful a sea of disputation, on which so many hardy adventurers have suffered shipwreck. Thus far is clear, that the Langue d'oeil soon became the favourite of

courts and people; that its poets principally devoted themselves to works more calculated to ensure popularity; and that the productions of its less fortunate rival fell into unmerited neglect. The real extent of Provençal genius and literature is likely to remain for ever buried in oblivion, unless the researches of Spanish critics,—among whom, especially in Arragon, a great mass of Troubadour poetry appears to have been mouldering unnoticed,—shall restore the treasures that are known to be still in existence in that land which saw so much of their ancient glory.

SECTION II.

CATALONIA.—Connection between the courts of Barcelona and Provence.—Catalan language.—Remains of its poetry.—Ascendancy of the Castilian tongue.—Mosen Jordi de Sant Jordi.—Mosen Jayme Febrer.—Jayme Roig.—Ausias March. CASTILLE.—Supposed Hispano-Arabic origin of Troubadour poetry controverted.—The different classes of early Castilian poetry.—The Spanish Trobadors.—Alexandro Magno.

THE intimate connection between the Troubadours of Provence and those of Catalonia and Arragon leads us naturally to a few observations on the obscure memorials, which have come down to us, of the history and works of the poets who once graced this division of Spain. From the earliest days of Provençal glory its court had enjoyed the most intimate union with that of Barcelona; and its subsequent union with the Arragonese crown, in the person of Alphonso the Second, extended the empire of love and poetry over a great portion of the south-western district of Spain. The Provençal language seems to have been popular at the court, and many of the Spanish poets wrote in it; but their native tongue, which bears great affinity to it, is one of great force and beauty, and probably of equal antiquity. It is certainly more ancient, at least as devoted to literary purposes, than the Castilian, which was then, probably, only developing itself

amongst the adventurers who gradually encroached upon the dominion of their Moorish conquerors; and it still continues to be the popular dialect in Catalonia and (with more of Moorish intermixture) in Valencia. The Catalan is a genuine Romance tongue, evidently deduced from the Latin by the same process as the Provençal: and as the latter had received less intermixture from the Northern invaders, and was therefore less removed from its parent than the Norman French, so the Catalan suffered less adulteration than the Castilian from the Moors, whose empire was in this part of Spain short and precarious. It is a language "rich in musical sounds, abounding in rhymes, and divested of every thing harsh and grating in its utterance; equally free from the deep gutturals of its twin sister the Castilian, and the perpetually recurring nasal twang of the Portuguese." Yet if the Catalan poets did often use their native tongue, few early productions in it have survived to us. This is a matter of regret, as the pieces which we have of a later date in this tongue are often distinguished for the harmony of their versification, as well as the simplicity, tenderness and energy of their style. It is to be hoped that the awakened industry of the Spaniards will be directed towards the revival of this department of their ancient national literature. No one doubts the great prevalency of Provençal poetry in this part of Spain during the 12th

and 13th centuries; yet it has often been remarked with astonishment that hitherto not a single MS. has come from thence: the scantiness of the published remains of Catalan poetry is therefore no argument against its having once been as prolific and popular as the Provençal. The highly valuable letter of the Marquis of Santellana (the cotemporary of Ausias March), published by Sanchez, speaks of the Catalonian Troubadours as numerous, and in his day well known; and there is reason to believe that research alone is wanted, to bring to light treasures which ignorance and religious bigotry have so long consigned to neglect. Indeed a pamphlet by Fr. Jayme de Villanueva, entitled "Notizia del Viage Literario a las Iglesias de España, Valencia 1820," has lately reached this country; in which the author enumerates, amongst the other fruits of his inquiries, "a collection of unedited Provençal poets, with accounts of their authors, commencing with a fragment of the 12th century on the first Crusade; and notices of forty Limosin poets of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, with copies of some of their works," amongst which is the famous cancion of Mosen Jordi de Sant Jordi, called "Los opositos."

The Catalan Troubadours were doomed, like their Provençal brethren, to bow before more fortunate rivals. The Castilian was the triumphant star. Poets here too flocked to the rising court, and the Spanish

heroic romances better suited the tastes and feelings excited by the restless state of warfare in which Spain was perpetually engaged with the Moors. Yet the Catalonian school did not fall without efforts for its support. John the First of Arragon, according to Zurita, invited the poets of the South of France to Barcelona and Tortosa, and founded in 1390 an academy "dels Jogos florios," which he sought to supply from a similar academy of the Gay Saber, which had been formed at Toulouse in 1323. But this was only a lingering protraction of the natural decay of the art. The gloom of an academy was a poor substitute for the sparkling light of a court of beauty. The heart must join in that gaiety which could inspire a genial Troubadour; for, as Bernard Ventadour sings,

Chantars no pot guaire valer
Si d' ins del cor no mov lo chans,
Ni chans no pot del cor mover,
Si no i es fin' amors coraus:
Per so es mos chantars cabaus;
Qu' en joy d'amor ai et enten
La boca, e'ls huels, e'l cor, e'l sen.

Little can sweetest song avail
If from the heart it do not come,
And from the heart it cannot spring
Unless there first be love at home.
And thus is love the soul to me
Of all my song and all my joy,
Entrancing eyes and lips, heart, soul, in harmony.

On the union of the crowns of Castille and Arra-

gon, the language of the former court became that of literature, and its rival met the same fate as the Provençal, and was reduced to the degradation of becoming a mere patois.

It has already been remarked, that scarcely any of the early productions of the Catalan poets have as yet been before the public; it will not therefore detain us long to mention the names of the few that have reached us. We have nothing left of what the Marquis de Santellana describes as the elegant poetry of Mosen Pero March, a knight of noble family of the 12th century; and must content ourselves with noticing, as the first known Catalan Troubadour, Mosen Jordi de Sant Jordi, who is usually placed in the beginning of the 13th century, subject to the doubts on that head which have arisen from the coincidence between some of his lines and parts of Petrarch's 104th Sonnet. The elucidation of this question may be sought with advantage in a learned article on the poetic literature of Spain, in the seventh number of the Retrospective Review (ascribed to the pen of Mr. Bowring), from which it may be permitted to quote a few lines, with their accompanying translation, as a specimen of the state of the language in which Mosen Jordi wrote:—

Esperanza res nom dona
A ma pena comportar
L' ora que vinch a pensar
Qui ofen jamay perdona.

Lo ofes afranqueix la cara
Et perdona quisque sia
Qui ofen tostemps din gara
Qui non faza per falsia.

Ausades Deu me confona
Si non cuit desesperar
L' ora que vinch a pensar
Qui ofen jamay perdona.

Beneath my grief I fainted not,
And hope within me seem'd to live
Until the moment when I thought
That they who injure ne'er forgive.

Be pardon ready !—oft one sees
A wound inflicted ne'er intended,
And oftener by carelessness
Than by design are men offended.

I hoped in vain—when hope had brought
Her dreams so fond, so fugitive;
I hoped—but sunk beneath the thought
That they who injure ne'er forgive.

Mosen Jayme Febrer is another Catalonian poet usually assigned to the 13th century; the Vatican preserves much of his unpublished poetry, and a curious poem by him, entitled "The Book of Linages," is analysed in the article before referred to. Both as to Jayme Febrer and Jordi de Sant Jordi, the doubt exists whether they have or have not been usually placed by the historians of Catalonian poetry at too early an age; the main argument turning upon the question of plagiarism above alluded to.

Jayme Roig and Ausias March, two Catalan poets of the 15th century, close the brief list of these Troubadours. Of them more is known. Ausias March's works have been more than once printed. He is the favourite of the Spanish Troubadours; and his character is thus traced by one who is fully capable of estimating his worth:—"His verses are harmonious, natural and pleasing, pregnant with interesting truths and moral reflections; they are generally pervaded by that soft spirit of melancholy which is so often the favourite companion of the lyre:

'Qui no es trist de mos dictats no cur'

is the opening line of the first poem; and this feeling runs through all. His poetry is the poetry of truth and wisdom: it has the condensation of proverbs, and the force of philosophy. His subjects are few—love, death, and duty; and they are treated with a sort of didactic solemnity. One listens to him as to an inspired teacher: his sanctions are brought alike from old mythology, from the Jewish and Christian codes, and from the books of legends; and all are introduced in the tone of one having authority, though for himself he constantly claims the title of a 'Chrestio molt devot.'"

It may be permitted to us to anachronize so far as to borrow one short extract of this poet's writings (which has been also quoted by Sismondi), in order

to illustrate the state of the language at that period:

Si com la mar se plang greument e crida
Com dos forts vents la baten egualment,
Hu de Levant e l' altre de Ponent,
E dura tant fins l' um vent la jequida
Sa força gran per lo mas poderos:
Dos grans dezigs han combatut ma pensa,
Mas lo voler vers un seguir dispensa;
Yol vos publich, amar dretament vos.

As when the sea groans heavily and cries
When two contending winds sweep o'er its breast,
One from the East, the other from the West,
Till the one yielding to the other dies;
Even so two mighty passions, angrily,
Have long contended in my breast, until
Obeying the high dictates of my will
I followed one—that one was, love to thee!

Mr. Roscoe's *Translat. of Sismondi*, vol. i. p. 249.

It would perhaps have been unnecessary to have touched upon Castilian poetry, which has very little bearing upon the period and class of composition that come under consideration in this little work, if it were not desirable to notice the hypothesis, supported principally by Father Andrez in his work 'Dell' Origine e de' Progressi d' ogni Letteratura,'

and since adopted by MM. Ginguené and Sismondi, —that the Provençal poetry owes its origin to the Spanish Arabs. Nothing is more annoying, than the perpetual efforts of so many writers to hunt out fancied origins for all the products of the imagination of the middle ages, and to pass them from port to port and country to country, like a bale of merchandize or a price current. "Sans doute," M. Schlegel observes, in his 'Observations sur la Langue et la Litérature Provençales,' "dans l'histoire de la civilisation, il faut suivre avec soin les traces des communications qui ont eu lieu entre différens peuples; mais il faut bien se garder de confondre les analogies qui ont leur source dans la nature humaine, avec les ressemblances dérivées de l'imitation. Si vous refusez la puissance créative à l'homme presque dans tous les siècles et dans tous les pays, si vous faites pour ainsi dire la généalogie de toute activité intellectuelle, vous rendez la première invention d'autant plus inconcevable; et vous avez créé une difficulté au lieu d'en résoudre une. Tous les peuples bien doués ont eu le besoin et le goût de la poésie, elle s'est développée partout où les circonstances ont été propices."

Nothing, however, will satisfy the majority of these distrusters of the powers of nature, but hunting out the genealogical pedigree of every thought and feeling: and in pursuing the inquiry, it has been quite of course to overlook the philosophic maxim of resting

content when we discover causes adequate to the production of the existing phenomenon ;—

"Ye gods, annihilate both space and time"

seems to be no extravagant wish for one who desires to make a theory hold water. Thus Warton embarks his cargo of fiction consigned to the ports of Toulon and Marseilles, conveys it on by land-carriage to Brittany, and leaves it, under the impetus he has given it, to find its way thence into the mountains of Wales, or the court of Strathclyde ;—and all this to escape the shorter process of allowing to native bards the exercise of their own fancies, which were, to all appearance, as competent to create, as those of the supposed exporters of surplus produce in Spain. So, too, the editor of Antar sees the heroes of the round-table in the Bedouin rover, and tells us "that little more was wanted to compose the romances of the middle ages, than to engraft on the war, love, and courtesy of the Arabs, the splendid and soft luxuries of the other countries of the East, the witchcraft of Africa, the religious fervour of the South of Europe, and the gloomy superstitions of the North." A curious meeting this on the plains of Brittany.

Massieu imports the Arabic poetry with Warton's fiction, by sea at Toulon and Marseilles : for he tells us that by the convenience of these ports it passed with the commerce between Spain and France. Father Andrez is less prudent, in so far as he is more

particular as to time and place, and fixes the æra when the gallant knights of the South of France could have learnt the songs of the Moors, at the taking of Toledo in 1085. Unfortunately, Mr. Raynouard has published a Provençal poem anterior to 1000; and the finished versification of the earliest known specimens gives us every reason to suppose the Troubadour muse to have been long cultivated. Unfortunately, too, the Spaniards themselves (with whom these French knights fought, and whose literature, though at a much later period, has the most resemblance to that of the Moors,) have nothing in the least approaching to the character of the Troubadour poetry till they imitated it in later ages; and moreover, the earliest school of Spanish poetry is that which bears least affinity to the Oriental.

It is almost vain to ask upon what grounds this supposed derivation of the Provençal love-songs from the Arabs could rest. One would naturally be at a loss to think it probable that a poetry founded on a devoted idolatry of woman, and her absolute supremacy in the social system, should have sprung from a people whose principles lead to conclusions totally the reverse; or that those of the Christians, who fled to mountain fastnesses, and only met their moslem foes for deadly combat, should make them their masters in the fine arts. When indeed the Christians afterwards gained the ascendancy, the population might

be expected to have imbibed much of the manners and perhaps the literature of their late masters. So, in fact, it turned out: but the character of this early Castilian literature is altogether different from that of the Troubadours. Both Moors and Spaniards must have considerably assimilated during so long a period of intermixture:—for instance, the Arabs learned to raise their women to a rank in society approaching that which they enjoyed among the Christians, though not to any great extent, for the allusions to the state of females in society contained in Conde's compilations from the Arabian documents are strictly Oriental: and, on the other hand, their schools of mathematics, physics and philosophy, were resorted to by the studious of all religious denominations. But it is perfectly absurd to attribute to them such an influence as is asserted over the poetic genius and social relations of distant European countries, at a time when the same principles were at work every where, in giving the spring to civilization and the culture of the mental faculties. M. Ginguené will not even allow the smiling descriptions of the beauties of nature, the joyous revelling in the genial influences of spring, the delights of fields, of flowers, of brooks and groves, to be natural ornaments of poetic imagination:—"tout cela est ORIENTAL," he observes. Surely Görres is more philosophic in his observation, —that it was easier for our forefathers to search in

their own breasts for the feelings which their poetry breathes, than to mine the inaccessible rocks of foreign manners and language. We might with as much propriety seek our origin of such songs of joy in that of the ancient Hebrew poet;

> Rise up, my love!
> My fair one! and come away!
> For lo! the winter is past,
> The rain is over and gone;
> The flowers appear on the earth,
> The time of the singing of birds is come,
> And the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land;
> The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs,
> And the vines, with the tender grape, give smell:
> Rise up, my love!
> My fair one! and come away!

What is the internal evidence on which the supposed derivation of Troubadour poetry from the Arabs rests? Are these critics acquainted with the poetry of the nations whom they thus unite? Father Andrez admits "Egli è vero che nelle composizioni de' Provenzali non si scorge vestigio d' Arabica erudizione; ne v' è segno alcuno d' essersi formati i Provenzali poeti su le poesie degli Arabi." But he adds, "Non si ravvisa neppure che fossero più versati nell' opere de' Greci e de' Latini, ne si vede uso alcuno delle favole Greche e dell' antico mitologia." His admission would probably be considered sufficient to destroy his theory; but unluckily, this passage shows that Father Andrez, like many other

writers on Provençal poetry, in reality knew very little of it, or he would have been aware that it contains almost as many references to classical heroes and stories as to those of the romances of chivalry. These classical allusions are sometimes rather happily contrived; as in the following pretty stanza of Bernard de Ventadour, referring to the magical lance of Peleus:

Ja sa bella boca rizens
No cugei baizan me trays,
Mas ab un dous baizar m' aucis;
E s'ab autre no m' es guirens,
Atressi m' es per semblansa
Cum fo de Peleus la lansa,
Que de son colp non podi' hom guerir,
Si per eys loc no s' en fezes ferir.

References to the mythological tales of Ovid are frequent: as for instance in another piece of Bernard de Ventadour, translated in a subsequent part of this volume, the story of the fate of Narcissus is referred to:

Anc pueissas non pogui aver
De me poder, de lor en sai,
Qu' ela m fetz a mos huels vezer
En un miralh que molt mi plai.
Mirahls! pois me mirei en te,
M' an mort li sospir de preon
Qu' aissi m perdei, cum perdet se
Lo bels Narcezis en la fon.

In the following lines, a passage from Horace,—

" fungar vice cotis," &c.—is thus rendered by Bernard Martin,

> Ab so qu' ieu sembli be la cot
> Que non tailh' e fa 'l fer talhar;
> Aquo de qu' ieu no sai un mot
> Cugi ad autrui ensenhar.

On the other hand it may be worth remarking, that there are scarcely any allusions to Arabian or Moorish language, customs or feelings, throughout the whole body of published Troubadour poetry, though there is scarcely another country of which the same can be said. Some have fixed on rime as a striking feature derived from the Moors; yet the Teutonic nations rimed two centuries before the period of communication supposed by Father Andrez. It is clear that the acquaintance both of M. Sismondi and M. Ginguené with the Hispan-Arabic poetry is very slender; and it is equally clear that they are, by their own confession, incompetent to give a general judgement on Provençal. But M. Ginguené, in addition to his discovery that a feeling of the beauties of nature is altogether Oriental, asserts that the Italian sonnet is the lineal descendant of the Arabian Ghazel Casside. But here again, if this proves any thing, it raises no inference that the early Provençals borrowed from the Arabians; for they (the persons through whom the communication with Italy is supposed to have taken place) have not a sonnet in the whole body of their

poetry. They have indeed the name; but it has no such arbitrary meaning as that attached to it by the Italians.

Between the Spanish-Arabian poetry and the later Castilian alone is there any great affinity; and nothing is more widely removed from the French Troubadour than the Castilian school, till about the 15th century, when it began to be imitative.

For the best idea that can now perhaps be formed of the style and merits of the Hispan-Arabic poets, the reader must be referred to the highly interesting and valuable, though imperfect, work of Conde, on the history of the Moors of Spain, compiled exclusively by translating and arranging chronologically the Moorish chronicles; (Historia de la Dominacion de los Arabes en España sacada de varios manuscritos y memorias Arabicas, por el Doctor Don Jose Antonio Conde, &c. Madrid, 1820. 3 vols.) This is a book which it is to be hoped will appear in an English dress, and cannot but be considered of the highest value as a picture of the manners, thoughts and literature of this most singular people, drawn by their own cotemporary historians, and brought before the public by a man who devoted his life to the pursuit. No one but must be curious to see the campaigns in France, the battles with Charles Martel, and the perpetual struggles with the rising Christian states of Spain, in the chronicles of a people for a long time

perhaps the most enlightened in Europe. The work is continually interspersed with selections from the Moorish poetry of the time; and certainly the tone and character of none of these extracts give the least countenance to the supposition that the Troubadour poetry was borrowed from, or had the least affinity to, the early Arabian school. The burden of them in general is warlike or didactic, and the allusions to the female sex are just what would be expected to characterize Eastern manners, and as much the reverse of Troubadour feelings.

To illustrate this observation, we need only quote the little song of Hemad de Taharti, who concealed his verses in a rose, where it was likely to meet the eye, not of his *mistress*, as a Troubadour would have done, but of his *king*. It has more of the Troubadour turn than any other of the pieces in Conde: yet the singular and unchivalric mode of addressing and complimenting the lady, by reminding her of her being made for a slave, is sufficiently distinctive of this class of poetry from the Provençal taste.

Woman, though but the dross of man,
Created to obey,
Reverses nature's *wisest* plan,
And soon usurps the sway.

When,—not in summer-hours,—the rose
Through many a field we seek,
'Tis vain; but no! the sweetest blows,
Fair damsel, on thy cheek.

Grant the petition I present,
Grant this one prayer of mine:
'Tis form'd of roses, and 'twas meant
To praise those cheeks of thine.

These verses, adds the Moorish chronicler, were read, applauded and sung by the slaves of the king, and Taharti obtained the favour he sought, and a sum of money. In the chronicle of the exploits of king Abdelmumen (A.D. 1155), he is stated to have been a prince of great taste and erudition; to have made several literary innovations, particularly in "prohibiting with much severity the burning of books of chivalrous adventures; and to have permitted the writing of histories, adventures, and tales." "These orders," it is stated, "were published in all the provinces as well of Africa as of Andalusia," which was always the fountain of Moorish genius and poetry. This curious passage throws still further doubt on the theories which place the origin of any of this sort of literature in Spain, and would rather lead us to suspect the direct reverse to be the truth.

During the splendid period of Arabic literature in Spain, the Gothic party in their retreat had, doubtless, preserved and gradually fixed that species of Romance which became the language, in the first instance, of Castille, and eventually of all Spain. Its earliest state and formation it is as impossible to trace in Spain as in other European states. That language

cannot, however, have been of recent formation, which in the works of its earliest poets appeared in nearly as determinate a form of construction as it possesses at this day, allowance being made for the greater or less preponderance of Arabic words, which depends principally on the relative positions of the different provinces.

The earliest efforts of the Castilian poets are of an epic cast, abounding chiefly in military adventure, and consisting for the most part in detached scenes of the exploits of the Cid and other warriors. This seems the genuine early national school of Castilian poetry. It has no feature in common with the Provençal or Catalan Troubadours, and scarcely any affinity to the Oriental schools. Next come the ballads of chivalry founded on the French romances, which are probably none of them older than the latter part of the 14th century. Soon after commenced the æra of the later Spanish romances, pastoral ballads, &c. so justly admired, and of the Trobador or amatory school of Spain, which is to a great extent merely imitative of the later efforts of the Provençaux and Italians. Last in date are the ballads of the proper Moorish school, which belong to the age when the Spanish power was finally overwhelming the Moorish dynasty, and entering on the seats of their luxury and ease: of these it has been said with truth they "live like echoes about the ruins of Moorish greatness."

But though the proper Trobador or amatory poetry of the Spaniards did not arise till it had nearly expired in other countries, the early kings of Leon and Castille were not insensible of the attractions of the Provençal poets. Ferdinand III. of Castille, in the beginning of the 13th century, welcomed them to his court, as Alphonso IX. had done at that of Leon: and Alphonso the Wise, the great poet and astronomer of the same century, is reported to have issued an edict, at the suggestion of Giraud Riquier, a Troubadour, for purging their ranks of those idle pretenders who disgraced them, and restoring the honourable name of Troubadours to those only "qui supieren componer danzas, coplas, arias, juegos-partidos," &c.

Little of the existing poetry of Spain can be traced to a very remote antiquity. The venerable but rude poem of the Cid is probably to be dated half a century after the Troubadour William count of Poitiers had flourished; and Gonzalo Berceo, who selected religious legends for his subjects, is to be placed in the middle of the 13th century, about which time also, or perhaps rather earlier, was written the romance of Alexandro Magno, of which an extract will shortly be given. In the second half of the 14th century, the regular school of Castilian poetry may be said to have its proper commencement; in that period we may probably date the earliest of the ro-

mances or ballads in the form in which they now exist: the Trobador or amatory poetry, of which the Cancioneros are so full, and which were formed on the model of the Provençal school, or rather on the affected style of their Italian imitators, belongs chiefly to the 15th and 16th centuries.

Many of the works of the poets of this class are, however, undoubtedly highly national, and of great and original beauty, especially where they partake of the simple spirit of the ancient ballad. But with these we can have nothing to do here, for they are too late in date to come within the limits proposed for our selections. It would be presumption, too, to venture upon a topic so delightfully illustrated by Mr. Bowring's genius; we shall therefore content ourselves with giving the following verses as a specimen of the earliest form and comparative perfection of the Castilian tongue, in a graver class of poetry. They are from Alexandro Magno, the poem just alluded to, commencing at line 1788:

El mes era de Mayo un tiempo glorioso
Quando facen las aves un solaz deleytoso,
Son vestidos los prados de vestido fremoso
De sospiros la dueña la que non ha esposo.

Tiempo dolce è sabroso por bastir casamientos,
Ca lo tempran las flores è los sabrosos vientos,
Cantan las doncellejas, son muchas a convientos,
Facen unas a otras buenos pronunciamentos.

Caen en el verano las bonas rociadas;
Entran en flor las miesses, ca non ya espigadas,
Entonz casan algunos que pues messan las barbas
Facen las dueñas triscas en camisas delgadas.

Andan mozas è viejas cobertas en amores,
Van coger por la siesta a los prados las flores,
Dicen unas a otras " Bonos son los amores,
Y aquellos plus tiernos tienense por meiores."

Los dias son grandes, los campos reverdidos,
Son los passariellos del mal pelo exidos,
Los tabanos que muerden non son aun venidos,
Luchan los monagones en bragas sen vestidos.

El Rey Alexandre, un corpo acabado,
Al sabor del tiempo que era bien temprado,
Fizo corte general, su corazon pagado:
Non fue varon en Persia que non fus y iuntado.

It was the month of May, in the bright and glorious spring,
When the birds in concert sweet on the budding branches sing,
When the meadows and the plains are rob'd in verdure green,
And the mateless lady sighs, despairing o'er the scene.

A gentle tempting time for loving hearts to meet,
For the flow'rs are blossoming, and the winds are fresh and sweet;
And, gather'd in a ring, the maidens wear away
In mirthful talk and song the blithe and sunny day.

Soft fall the gentle dews, an unfelt-freshening rain,
The corn puts forth the hope of harvests rich in grain,
The down-cheek'd stripling now is wedded to his love,
And ladies, lightly clad, in bounding dances move.

For love o'er young and old now holds its mightiest sway;
The siesta's hour to grace they pluck the wild flowers gay,
While each to other tells how love is ever blest,
But the tenderest suit, they own, is the happiest and the best.

The days are long and bright, the fields are green once more,
The birds have ceased to moult, and their mourning time is o'er;
No gad-fly yet appears with bite of venom keen,
But the youths in wrestling strive half-naked on the green.

'Twas then that Alexander, of Persia conquering king,
Moved by the fragrant call of that delightful spring,
Throughout his wide domain proclaim'd a general court,
And not a lord o' the land but thither made resort.

SECTION III.

ITALY.—Comparatively late application of its language to poetic purposes.—Use of other tongues.—Early Italian poets.—Sicilian school.—Tuscan school.—Character of early Italian poetry.—Petrarch. NORTHERN FRANCE.—Formation of the Northern Romance.—Intercourse between North and South France.—First attempts at poetry in the former.—Patronage of the Anglo-Norman court.—Lais and Fabliaux.—Lyric poetry.—Pastorals.—Comparative merits of the Northern and Southern tongues.

CONSIDERING the perfection in which the earliest known specimens exhibit the language of Italy,—the delight which it is clear its inhabitants felt in the poetry and romances of the North and South French,—and the free intercourse with other nations which existed during their connexion with the Norman princes of Sicily and with the German Empire,

Sotto l' imperio del buon Barbarossa

and his successors,—it appears strange that Italian literature should have been so far behind that of almost every other country;—that its earliest poets should have preferred foreign tongues, without making any attempt to cultivate their own, though in many respects superior;—and yet that, after so much torpor, it should at length break forth all at once in such

comparative splendour and perfection. The Provençal writers must have been perfectly familiar to the Italians; for their early writers, such as Guittone d'Arrezzo (in his Letters), Dante, and Petrarch, are full of allusions to them, and of the warmest eulogiums on their works. Several of the Troubadours themselves, for example Sordel, (who is introduced in the 6th and 9th cantos of the Purgatorio,) Boniface Calvo, and Folquet, who, as Petrarch tells us,

> —a Marsiglia il nome ha dato,
> Ed a Genova tolto—

were Italians. Even the German language,—so unharmonious as we should conceive to the delicate ears of Italians,—was adopted by at least one of their ancient poets. The poem alluded to is of the 13th century, written probably under the patronage of the Emperor Frederic II., whom it eulogizes, and directed, in the usual strain of invective, against the vices and the follies of the day. It is entitled Der Welsche Gast,—The Welch Guest,—Welch being a name then used by the Germans for all the Southern or Latin nations. The author, who is called Thomasin von Ferrera, with some half-dozen aliases (see Eschenburg's Denkmäler), announces himself thus modestly:—

> Ich bin von Friul geborn,
> Und lazze gar one zorn

Swer ane spott mein getiht,
Und nine tütsche bezzert iht;
Ich heiz Thomasin— &c.

Towards the end of the poem he gives the reason for the title assumed by him, as being a foreigner, a "guest," among Germans:

Mein buch heizet der welsche Gast,
Wan ich bin an der tutsche Gast.

And he craves excuse on the same account for writing bad German:

Missprich ich der tütsche icht,
Das dünche üch wunderlich nicht,
Wann ich gar ain walch bin;
Des wirt an miner tütsch erschin.*

But the foreign language most popular in Italy seems to have been the North French, in which many of its writers avowedly composed. One of them, Brunetto Latini, in the 13th century declares that he did so "parceque François est plus delitables langages et plus communs que tous autres." Yet amidst all this admiration of the various classes of poetry and romance which were holding their bright reign all around, scarcely any attempts were made at imitation of them in the vernacular tongue of the Italians. They seem to have been restrained by a proud and lingering attachment to classical tastes, and a distrust of the new literature, from which they still could

* "If I blunder in my German, think it not wonderful, since I am a Welch, as will appear by my German."

not withhold the homage of affection. At length, however, the Troubadour spirit, when expiring in France, revived in the colder but more classical rimes of the Petrarchan school: and again, when the glory of Romance was fading away in its native climes, the Italian poets adopted, fostered, and matured it in the most beautiful specimens of their art.

The native Italian poetry seems to have made its first appearance at the court of Sicily, where the French and German poets had resorted in great numbers under the Norman princes, and afterwards under the sovereigns of the houses of Swabia and Anjou. But the number of attempts to adapt the Italian tongue to the purposes of poetry appears for a long time to have been very limited. Yet it cannot be thought that the language was previously too crude and unfashioned for poetic use. Whatever side we may take in the disputes as to the very remote antiquity claimed for it by some critics, it cannot be doubted that it had at any rate kept pace with the other tongues which had arisen from the Latin, and which were so much sooner consecrated to the service of the Muses. The truth is, that in the 11th and 12th centuries, the society and literature of Italy were very differently characterized from those of other European countries. While the pride of feudal aristocracy and the pomp of chivalry were elsewhere at their height, the commercial states of Italy were

arising, and directing men's minds to subjects alien from the gay institutions and popular feelings which gave their life and spirit to the Troubadour muse. The states of the Church were as little congenial with such pursuits. Italy had none of the romantic gallantry, the ardent enterprise, which, amidst all their irregularities, roused the genius and passions of the surrounding nations. It could boast of erudite research, of the classical studies and intricate dialectics of the philosophic schools of Salernum; but gallantry and the Gai Saber found no fellowship with the Trivium and Quadrivium. It had no childhood of romantic poetry, arising as it were naturally from its institutions and society; though it afterwards adopted the spirit of the new school, mixed with a peculiar affected and metaphysical turn of thought, which has given, even to the works of some of the most distinguished Italian poets, a coldness and conceit that speak to the wit more than to the heart. They sang of love, but as of a principle, a platonic abstraction, not a tender or glowing feeling; and all allusions to sense were banished from what now became the empire of busy thought.

Little can be quoted, that possesses any interest, from the Italian poets before Petrarch: but to complete the circle of our view, a few specimens may be produced, more for the sake of elucidating the state of the language than for the excellence of the matter.

There exists among the remains of the Troubadours, a "descort" by Rambaud de Vaqueiras, a Provençal, written most probably about the year 1200, which, according to Crescimbeni, exhibits in the first stanza the Provençal tongue, in the second the Italian in the Tuscan dialect, in the third Norman-French, in the fourth Gascon, in the fifth Spanish; in the sixth there is what he calls a melange of them all; that is to say, of the ten lines which it contains, two are of each of the above five languages, in the same order as they stand in the preceding stanzas. But one cannot help entertaining considerable suspicion of the poet's power to give a faithful specimen of so many foreign tongues: and when our inquiry is simply directed to the state of a language, it is not very safe to rely on the work of one who was probably imperfectly acquainted with it except in sound.

Undoubtedly either the Italian of this piece differs very widely from that which the poets of the country adopted, or the idiom of the Sicilians of about the same period had made much greater advances towards perfection, and was much nearer the present classical language of Italy. After all, however, a great deal of the early difference between these Romance or bastard Latin languages, consists more in the orthography than either the sound or the grammar; an arbitrary orthography being adopted by each dialect when it began to be used for literary purposes,

a little variation in each removed it very widely from the common standard; and those soon appeared to be distinct languages, which originally were perhaps hardly to be called separate dialects, and even still in sound continued to be very similar, however distinct they looked upon paper. This descort has been several times printed, and is not worth translation: but perhaps it will not be thought out of its place here, as it is a curious specimen of the whimsical direction often given to the talents of the Troubadour poets, and is now published correctly from the MS., which differs materially from the copy in the Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions, where it seems given with the carelessness usual with many of the French critics. The poet's mind being troubled by the mutability of his mistress's mind, he determines to make the strain of his complaint as variable in the tongues in which it is to be uttered.

Eras [1] quan vey [2] verdeyar
Pratz e vergiers e boscatges,
Vuelh [3] un *Descort* comensar
D' amor, per qu' ieu vauc a ratges [4];
Q' una domna m sol [5] amar,
Mas camjatz l' es sos coratges [6],
Per qu' ieu fauc [7] dezacordar
Los motz e 'l sos [8] e 'ls lenguatges.

---

[1] Maintenant. [2] vois. [3] veux. [4] vais a l' aventure. [5] solitus est. [6] cœur. [7] fais. [8] son.

Ieu sui selh [9] que be [10] non ayo [11],
Ni jamais non l' avero,
Per Abrilo ni per Mayo,
Si per mia dona non l'o [12];
Certo que en son lenguaio
Sa gran beutat dir no so;
Plus fresqu' es que flors de glayo,
E ja [13] no m' en partiro.

Belha, doussa [14], dama chera [15],
A vos [16] me don e m' autroy;
Ja n' aurai ma joy enteira,
Si je n' ai vos, e vos moy;
Molt estes mala guerreya [17],
Si je muer per bona foy;
E ja [18] per nulha maneira
No m partrai de vostra loi.

Dauna [19], io me rent a bos [20],
Quar eras m' es [21] bon' e bera [22];
Ancse es [23] guallard' e pros [24],
Ab que no m fossetz tan fera [25];
Mout abetz beras faissos [26]
Ab coror fresqu' e novera;
Bos m' abetz, e s' ieu bs aguos
No m sofranhera fiera.[27]

---

[9] celui. [10] bien. [11] ai. [12] l'ai. [13] jamais. [14] Belle, douce. [15] chère. [16] vous. [17] mauvaise guerrière, méchante ennemie. [18] jamais. [19] Donna. [20] vous,—throughout this stanza the *v* is changed into *b*. [21] vous m'etes. [22] vraie. [23] Toujours vous êtes. [24] brave. [25] Pourvu que vous ne me fussiez si fiers. [26] moult vous avez vraies façons.

[27] Avec couleur fraiche et nouvelle;
Vous m' avez, et si je vous avois
Ne me manquerait foire.

Mas tan temo vostro pleito [28],
Todo 'n soy escarmentado;
Por vos ai pena e maltreyto
E mei corpo lazerado;
La nueyt, quan soy en mey leito,
Soi mochas ves resperado [29]
Por vos, cre [30], e non profeito;
Falhit soy en mey cuidado,
Mais que falhir non cuydeyo.

Belhs Cavaliers, tant es cars [31]
La vostr' onratz senhoratges,
Que quada [32] jorno m' esglayo.
Oy! me lasso! que faro,
Si seli [33] que g' ey plus chera
Me tua [34], no sai por qoy [35]?
Ma dauna, fe que dey bos,
Ni peu cap Sanhta Quitera [36],
Mon corasso m' avetz trayto
E mout gen faulan furtado.[37]

The German emperors of the house of Swabia not only admired and patronized every where the popular French poetry, but stimulated their subjects to emulation in their native tongues. In this they were as much actuated by sound policy as by a liberal taste; for it is impossible for any one acquainted with the history of the age, not to have observed how powerfully its rising literature was directed to weaken the in-

---

[28] complainte, querelle. [29] suis maintes fois réveillé. [30] je crois. [31] cher. [32] chaque. [33] celle. [34] tue. [35] quoi. [36] et par le chef de Sainte Quitère.

[37] Mon cœur vous m' avez arraché
Et en moult bien parlant dérobé.

fluence of the Church, both indirectly by stimulating the intellect of mankind, and directly by the daring manner in which its professors openly combined to expose the papal corruption, and to rouse that resistance which the prevailing superstition rendered it difficult for sovereigns to effect by open force of arms. Dante (de Vulg. Eloq. 1. 12.), as quoted by Mr. Carey, bears express testimony to the salutary influence of the Imperial patronage:—"Those illustrious worthies, Frederic the Emperor and his son Manfredi, manifested their nobility and uprightness of form as long as fortune remained, by following pursuits worthy of men, and disdaining those which are suited only to brutes. Such, therefore, as were of lofty spirit and graced with natural endowments, endeavoured to walk in the track which the majesty of such great princes had marked out for them; so that, whatever was in their time attempted by eminent Italians first made its appearance in the court of crowned sovereigns; and because Sicily was a royal throne, it came to pass that whatever was produced in the vernacular tongue by our predecessors was called Sicilian, which neither we nor our posterity shall be able to change."

During the last part of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century, Henry VI. and Frederic II. had added Naples and Sicily to their Italian possessions; and there the first known efforts of the Italian muse

appeared. Ciullo d'Alcamo, a Sicilian, at the end of the 12th century, sings in no very despicable strain, as quoted by M. Ginguené from Allacci's Poeti Antichi—

Rosa fresca aulentissima
Capari in ver l' estate
Le donne te desiano
Pulcelle e maritate,
Traheme deste focora
Se teste a bolontate,
Per te non aio abento nocte e dia
Pensando pur di voi, Madonna mia

But Frederic II. himself was one of the earliest Italian rimers, and thus commences a canzone in a style remarkable neither for its purity nor poetic fire:—

Poiche ti piace, amore
Ch' eo deggia troyare,
Faron de mia possanza
Ch' eo venga a compimento.
Dato haggio lo meo core
In voi, Madonna, amare;
E tutta mia speranza
In vostro piacimento.
E no mi partiraggio
Da voi, donna valente;
Ch' eo v' amo dolcemente;
E piace a voi ch' eo haggia intendimento;
Valimento mi date, donna fina;
Che lo meo core adesso a voi s' inchina.

With him we must place his learned but unfortunate chancellor Petrus de Vineis, who uses a purer

idiom; indeed, one that seems as classical as that of Dante—

Or potess' io venire a voi, amorosa,
Come il ladron ascoso, e non paresse:
Ben lo mi terria in gioja avventurosa
Se l' amor tanto di ben mi facesse;
Se bel parlare, donna, con voi fora;
E direi come v' amai lungamente,
Più che Piramo Tisbe dolcemente
E v' ameraggio, in fin ch' io vivo, ancora.

Guido delle Colonne follows a few years later in the same school, and tells his lady,

Ben passa rose e fiori
La vostra fresca cera,
Lucente più che spera;
E la bocca aulitusa
Più rende aulente audore
Che non fa una fera
C' ha nome la Pantera.*

Jacopo da Lentino, of the same period, furnishes a sonnet that proves the Italians to have very early attached themselves to that form and style of poetry to which they so long adhered with success. The mixture of love and religion is in the genuine feeling of the Troubadours.

Io mi agio posto in core a Dio servire
Com' io potesse gire in Paradiso,
Al santo loco c' agio audito dire
Ove si mantiene sollazzo, gioco e riso.

* The panther is introduced in several of the early Italian poets as a subject of comparison. How the breath of that beast acquired the repute assigned to it, does not appear.

Senza la mia donna non vi vorria gire,
Quella c' a la blonda testa el claro viso,
Che senza lei non porzeria gaudire
Estando da la mia donna diviso.
Ma non lo dico a tale intendimento
Perche peccato ci vollesse fare
Se non vedere lo suo bello portamento,
E lo bello viso el morbido sguardare;
Che lo mi tiria in gran consolamento
Vegendo la mia donna in gioja stare.

Following the example of the Sicilian poets, arose the Tuscan school, nearer the middle of the 13th century. Guido Guinicelli stands one of the first in the rank, and his language differs little from the purest classic Italian. His style, too, is thoroughly characteristic of the national taste.

Al cor gentil ripara sempre amore
Si come augello in selvo a la verdura:
Non fe amore anzi che gentil core,
Ne gentil core anzi ch' amor, natura.
Ch' adesso com' fu 'l sole
Si tosto lo splendore fue lucente;
Ne fue duvanti al' sole;
E prende amore in gentillezza luoco,
Cosi propiamente
Com' il calore in clarità del foco.

To gentle heart doth Love for shelter fly
As birds for refuge to the shady grove:
Not elder born than Love is Courtesy,
Nor doth fair Courtesy precede true Love:
Like as the glorious light
Sprung forth at rising sun,
And was not till that orb appear'd,
So Love and Courtesy are one. &c.

Guittone d'Arezzo (who died in 1294) was also a

writer of sonnets, many of which are published in the Giunti collection of Tuscan poets of 1527: some of them will bear to be placed by the side of those of his great successor Petrarch, and often display touches of considerable feeling *.

Ben forse alcun verrà dopo qualch' anno
Il qual leggendo i mei sospiri in rima,
Se dolerà della mia dura sorte:
E chi sa se colei ch' or non mi estima,
Visto con il mio mal giunto il suo danno,
Non deggia lagrimar della mia morte.

In after years perhaps there may be one
Who, dwelling on the music of my sighs,
May grieve in pity at my destinies:
Who knows but she, whose breast would now disown
One kinder thought, may then repent her hate,
And, viewing then my misery as her own,
May drop a tear o'er my untimely fate?

Guido Cavalcanti (who died in 1300) is the only one of these early poets whose productions have any lightness or animation. His works have been collected and published by Cicciaporci at Florence in 1813: his ballads (ballatette) or pastorals have something of the old Troubadour gaiety † and feeling of delight

* It should be observed that there is some controversy among Italian antiquaries as to the authenticity of these sonnets.

† The measure of these little pieces is sprightly and elegant:

Ballatetta, in Toscana,
Va tu leggiera e piana,
Dritta alla Donna mia—

There is an interesting article on Guido's history and poetry in the New Monthly Magazine, vol. v. p. 1.

in the beauties of nature. Petrarch has quoted from him in his 17th canzone; and Dante bears his testimony to his superior popularity over Guido Guinicelli (PURG. cant. xi.); at the same time that he is generally supposed, perhaps without foundation, to prophesy his own superiority over both.

Credette Cimabue nella pittura
Tener lo campo; et ora ha Giotto il grido,
Si che la fama di colui oscura.
Cosi ha tolto l' uno al l' altro Guido
La gloria de la lingua; e forse è nato
Chi l' uno e l' altro caccerà di nido.
Non è 'l mondan romore altro ch' un fiato
Di vento, ch' or vien quinci e or vien quindi,
E muta nome, perchè muta lato.

Yet Dante seems to doubt the classical purity of the last poet's style, and to consider it as deviating too daringly from ancient models; for in the INFERNO, c. 10, when Guido's father inquires from the tomb,

Mio figlio ov' è, e perchè non è teco?

Dante replies, alluding to his companion Virgil,

. . . Da me stesso non vegno;
Colui, ch' attende là, per qui mi mena;
Forse cui Guido vostro ebbe a disdegno.

Perhaps he only means to express the same distrust of the merits of their vernacular poetry, which the most successful cultivators of it seem continually to have felt, although popular applause induced them to sacrifice in some degree the superior attachment

which they themselves entertained for the Latin language and the classical standards of taste.

These are some of the best specimens of early Italian poetry, at a time when all other nations had made rapid progress in every department of the art. No variety or originality animates the Cisalpine muse. It is an imitative style, carrying to excess the coldest and most unnatural features of the Provençal poets, and marked by defects which have blemished the beauty of its proudest ornaments.

The two following stanzas, selected from the Provençal Arnaud de Marveil, show how nearly the Troubadour turn of thought sometimes resembles that of the Italian sonnetteers:—

So, lady! love and thou distract my heart,
That love I dare not—dare not yet refrain;
One goads me on—the other checks the rein;
True courage one—the one will fear impart:
And thus I rest, not daring to depart,
As shipwreck'd sailor gazes on the sea,
And knows his doom, and if he dar'd would flee,
And cries for mercy with dejected heart.

And those sweet looks, that form, that face so fair,
And pleasant smiles thou know'st so well to give,
The more my love awake, the more I live,
And hope the more, as I the more despair.
Thus do I rave, and yet I cannot tear
Myself from her, remembering what she is;
My folly I forget, and grasping bliss,
Following my will, my wisdom give to air.

The bolder spirit of the Troubadours is not to be

found in the early Italian songs; there are no gallant chivalrous feelings, no joy in spring, in fields and flowers, and no generous bursts of indignation against the weaknesses of courts and the vices of the church. When they talk of love, it is of some demi-religious principle dressed up in the abstractions of Platonism. Thomas Aquinas is most akin to the early lucubrations of these worthy Italians.

At length appeared Petrarch, who fixed the standard of Italian poetry, and became one of its brightest ornaments. He is the genuine disciple of the Provençal school, on which his taste was avowedly formed, and with which he is quite sufficiently identified to save it from that neglect into which many have heedlessly or ignorantly dismissed it. His poetry exhibits many of its defects, but with them most of its beauties, tempered by classical purity, and the by overflowings of an elegant mind and a tender heart. A Platonic spiritualization and a laboured play of thought reign throughout, and often greatly diminish the interest: yet his *Rime* bear with them so much exquisite feeling, and so much genuine poetry, that they will always command the admiration of the world, although, perhaps, few would be inclined to hold them up as upon the whole models for imitation.

Learned controversies have agitated the rival partisans of the Langue d'oc and Langue d'oeil, as to their comparative antiquity, their mutual relations, and the degree of influence on the literature of modern Europe which may properly be ascribed to each. The exact period to be assigned to the formation of the proper Northern Romance we can hardly expect to determine; the most probable theory may be, that one common Romance was universally diffused as the popular tongue over the Gallic provinces at a very early period, perhaps even under the Roman Government itself, but at least during that gradual dissolution of the Roman institutions, which took place on the establishment of the barbarian monarchies. It was, in fact, only such a language as might be expected to arise from the adoption of the Latin tongue by strangers, and was properly characterized by the term "Romana rustica." Its separation into different dialects to the extent which is exhibited in the two leading divisions—the Norman and Provençal—was the effect of later political operations. France, till the close of the Carlovingian dynasty, was in reality a mere province of Germany, and ruled by one who was, properly speaking, a foreign prince, with a court composed of his soldiers, whose language (the Francic) was totally different from that of the population governed. The ancient inhabitants are, in the legal docu-

ments of the conquerors, all Romans. Their language is the Roman language. On the final separation of the kingdom of France from the Empire, the real population of Gaul recovered its weight, and in time the court assumed its proper language. But for a long period it is manifest that the German rulers of France, and their military retainers, did not even trouble themselves to understand the dialect of the inhabitants and landholders. Even in 948, at the council of Ingelheim, Frodoard mentions that the Archbishop Artaud translated his letter into German, that Louis IV. might be able to understand it. The inconvenience of this state of things seems to have been in some degree remedied by the use of the Latin language for state purposes. At length, on the cessation of the Norman wars and the accession of Capet, arose the monarchy of *France*, (adopting the name which was in reality a badge of ancient servitude, as belonging to those Germans, on a separation from whom the independence of Gaul began;) and then, too, the language of its inhabitants once more became that of the state, under the name of *French*, which however belongs in truth as little to it as to the monarchy. The dialect of the North was more adulterated than that of the South, by intermixture with the German tribes; and the long separation of the Gallic provinces into France (properly so called) and Provence, left both tongues to form

in an independent manner. The South had always been less under the immediate dominion of the Francic army, and it had not been ravaged like the North by wave after wave of Norman devastation. It had reposed in comparative peace from the foundation of the kingdom of Arles and Provence, by Boson, in the 9th century; the Roman institutions had, to a great extent, been preserved, and its language had of course experienced less change. In the 11th century, therefore, we find the Provençal tongue melodious and flexible, while the Northern was struggling into notice as a written language, as yet crude and unfashioned: and we have some of the most harmonious of the Provençal songs much earlier than the date which we can with any certainty assign to the rudest productions of a similar kind in the North.

It does not follow, however, that the latest in time should be deprived of all claim to originality; for the same awakening of the intellect, the same materials for the exercise of the imagination, and the same stimulus from the institutions of the age, would in both countries produce in due time their natural results. In many of the favourite topics of pursuit, it is difficult to determine which dialect is entitled to the honour of invention; and in truth a great similarity must be expected to exist; for after a time the poets of both districts met and were

patronized at the same courts; the princes of the North allied themselves to the daughters of the South; the English monarchs, the principal patrons of the Norman literature, had possessions in both divisions, and drew the singers of both to their courts; and one common cause united them in the East.

The early intercourse between the two great divisions of France is not marked by expressions of much kindness or conciliation. Robert king of France about the year 1000 married Constance daughter of William count of Provence or Aquitaine; and the courtiers who followed in her train are thus described:—"Circa millessimum incarnati verbi annum, cum Robertus accepisset sibi reginam Constantiam a partibus Aquitaniæ in conjugium, cœperunt confluere, gratiâ ejus reginæ, in Franciam atque Burgundiam ab Avernià et Aquitaniâ, homines *omni levitate vanissimi*, moribus et veste distorti, armis et equorum phaleris incompositi, a medio capitis nudati, histrionum more barbis tonsi, caligis et ocreis turpissimi, fidei et pacis fœdere omnino vacui; quorum itaque nefanda exemplaria, heu, proh dolor! tanta gens Francorum (nuper omnium honestissima) ac Burgundionum sitibunda rapuit." (Glaber, p. 38, in Duchesne, Script. Rer. Franc. t. iv.) A few years later, a Norman (Radulph. Cadomens. in gestis Tancredi, ap. Murator.) describes an equally strong opposition of character:—"Gentis hujus (Francorum) sublimis est

oculus, spiritus ferox, promptæ ad arma dextræ, cæterùm ad spargendum prodigæ, ad congregandum ignavæ. His, quantum anati gallina, Provinciales moribus, animis, cultu, victu adversantur; parce vivendo, sollicite perscrutando, laboriferi: sed ne verum taceam, minus bellicosi." To return the compliment, William of Poitiers, the first Troubadour, boasts in one of his songs that he had never let a Frenchman or Norman appear at his court:—

Qu' anc non ac Norman ni Frances
Dins mon ostau.

It is very uncertain when the first efforts were made to raise the Northern French to the dignity of a poetic language; but we have every reason to believe that it was, at any rate, confined to devotional pieces, riming legends, and perhaps chronicles, till the æra of Louis VII. of France and Henry II. of England, (or rather more decisively the reign of Philip Augustus,) commencing with the latter half of the 12th century. And on this is built the commonly received opinion, that the marriage of Eleanor of Guienne, first with a French and afterwards with an English monarch, brought into notice the Provençal poets, of whom she was a zealous patron, and gave a stimulus to the application of the language of the North, then characterized by its simplicity and naïveté, to similar purposes. One of the most distin-

guished of the Troubadour poets, Bernard de Ventadour, sighed at the feet of this princess when she left the courts of the South to lead the intrigues of the North. It affords a curious commentary on the character in which our history exhibits this princess, to hear her addressed in such lines as these, which the poet seems to have penned to her when she had left France for England;

Quan la doss' aura venta
Deves vostre pais,
M'es veiaire qu'ieu senta
Odor de paradis,
Per amor de la genta
Ves cui ieu sui aclis,
En cui ai mes m'ententa,
E mon coratge assis.

Attempts have been made to carry the date of French lyric poetry much higher: and in the first place it is observed, that Ives de Chartres complains to Urban II. at the close of the eleventh century, of the popular poetic squibs which his opponent at Orleans had written against him:—"Unam cantilenam de multis metricè et musicè de eo compositam, ex personâ concuborum suorum vobis misi, quam per urbes nostras in compitis et plateis similes illi adolescentes cantitant." Again, Abelard was also a writer of love songs in praise of his Eloisa. Thus she says,—"Pleraque amatorio metro vel rhythmo composita reliquisti carmina; quæ pro nimiâ suavi-

tate, tam dictaminis quam cantûs, tuum in ore omnium nomen tenebant. Frequenti carmine tuam in ore omnium Heloisam ponebas. Me plateæ omnes, me domus singulæ resonabant." And St. Bernard himself is recorded to have composed "cantiunculas mimicas et urbanos modulos;" but the great doubt is, whether (as Ravallière thinks) all these songs were not written in Latin. There is, perhaps, less doubt about the "vulgares cantus" mentioned in the 'Gesta Dei' as being lampoons upon Arnulphus, Patriarch of Jerusalem under Godfrey de Bouillon; but it is not safe to rely on an earlier epoch for the popular use of the French language, at any rate in lyric poetry, than that which we have pointed out.

When, however, we point to the reign of Philip Augustus (1180—1223), or that of his predecessor, as the true commencement of the age of early French poetry, we must not connect its progress otherwise than chronologically with the courts of those monarchs. In the early literature of France, the court of Paris had little or no share: it belonged almost entirely to Normandy and England. The Northern Romance was nursed to its maturity by the fostering patronage of the Anglo-Norman princes, and with them continued its riper cultivation. The language was, however, long in an extremely unsettled state: even at the end of the 12th century we find it in some pieces approaching very nearly to the Proven-

çal in inflexion and melody; while in other authors of nearly the same period, it has much more of the structure of modern French. Thus Benoit (who perhaps wrote about 1170 or 1180), in describing the spring in which Rollo quitted England for Neustria, sings in a strain of very Southern cast:—

Quant li ivers fu trepasser,
Vint li duls tens, e li ester;
Venta l'aure sueve et quoie,
Chanta li merles et la treie;
Bois reverdirent e prael,
E gent florirent li ramel;
Parut la rose buen olanz
E altre flors de maint semblanz.

But Chrestien de Troyes (who died in 1191) uses what seems to be a ruder style, as in the chanson:—

Joie ne guerredons d'amours
Ne vienent pas par bel servir;
Car on voit chaus souvent faillir
Ki servent sans aller allours.
Si m'en aïr,
Quant celi serf sans repentir
Ki ne me veut faire secours.

Voirs est c'amours est grant douçours
Quant doi cuer sont un sans partir;
Mais amours fait l'un seul languir,
Et les anuis sentir tousjours.
Bien os gehir:
Que ne puis à amours venir
En amours gist tous mes secours.

The fame of the Trouvères mainly rests on their lais and fabliaux, to which, at least in the later period of their reign, they peculiarly devoted themselves,

and which, by the popularity of the subjects, have raised them in general estimation above their Southern rivals. Yet if their poetic excellence is to be tried by the standard of these compositions, it will, with few exceptions, stand rather low; for certainly tamer or more prosaic performances are scarcely to be met with than the generality of their tales; and in point of talent and poetic feeling, there is no comparison between the powers of these tellers of stories and of the Provençaux, after giving the latter their full share of blame for their follies and conceits.

But, though little known (having hitherto been left to slumber in MS.), there is almost as prolific a school of lyric poetry among the Northern as the Southern French poets. Indeed, it would be singular if there were not a great community of subjects when the poets of the two dialects were brought together at such courts as those of Henry II. and Eleanor of Guienne, and of their son Richard Cœur de Lion, who was himself a poet in both tongues, had dominions in each country, and was moreover allied, like most of the monarchs of his day, to a lady of one of the courts of the South—the daughter of the king of Navarre;

> "Her name was Berengere, faire woman of age,
> Was ther non hir Pere of no heiere parage."
> (Langtoft's Chron.)

Accident has prevented our perusing the MS.

stores of these neglected and almost unknown singers in the king's library of Paris, and making such selections from them for the present work as were desirable for comparing them with their cotemporaries; but from all that has been seen, there is little doubt they possess much of the sprightliness of heart which sparkles in the songs of the Troubadours and Minnesingers. The same devotion to the female sex, the same zeal in their service, the same curious blending of religious and amatory feelings and associations, distinguish these writers, as appear in the works of the Troubadours; they had institutions of gallantry corresponding in most respects to those of the South; they had their Puys or courts of love, and their Gieux sous l'ormel in May, where their Gieux-partis were the counterparts of the Provençal Tensons; they were as pathetic martyrs to "cis jolis maux," the pains of love; and that some of them were as keen pursuers of concetti is well known to those who have perused the chansons of king Thibaud, and seen the poet "in the prison of which Love keeps the keys, aided by his three bailiffs, Hope deferred, Beauty, and Anxiety."

Among the crowd of lyric poets of about the age of Philip Augustus, rank many of the nobility of the kingdom, such as Henry duke of Brabant, Peter Mauclerc count of Bretagne, the count of Anjou (brother of St. Louis, afterwards king of Naples, and

the husband of one of the daughters of the great Provençal house of Berengar), the count de la Marche, Gaces Brulez (the friend of Thibaud), Hughes de Bercy, Raoul de Soissons, and many others; none of whom, as Le Grand d'Aussy observes with some astonishment, ever attempted fabliaux, which he assumes must naturally have pleased them much better. He admits, however, that the language of these chansonniers, "sans être plus pure ni plus élégante que celle des autres auteurs leurs contemporains, est au moins plus coulante et plus douce."

The poet of this class who is most known, though perhaps he least deserves it, is Thibaud count of Champagne and king of Navarre, the "buon re Tebaldo" of Dante (Inf. xxii.), whose chansons the learned Ravallière has edited with so much sound erudition. Thibaud was born of a family that truly belongs to the literary history of the age. He was the grandson of Marie de France, that countess of Champagne who was so zealous a patron of the Provençal poets, and whose decisions were ever held to be law in the courts of love; and Marie herself was the daughter of Eleanor, whom we have seen to be the object of the worship of Bernard de Ventadour.

Bossuet has very summarily dismissed this riming monarch by describing him as one who made verses

which he was fool enough to publish. The Chroniclers of St. Denis, on the contrary, say that he "fit les plus belles chansons et les plus delitables et melodieuses qui furent oncques oyées." The reader must decide this for himself; but certainly the "buon re" is not gifted with the happiest turn of Troubadour feeling. He has none of the buoyant gallant spirit of his predecessors and of many of his cotemporaries; he aims at a more imposing march,—at a more philosophical turn of thought,—without much poetic genius to elevate, or either feeling or fancy to enliven, what we must often pronounce a very dull subject. He may be accurately classed with the early Italian sonnetteers.

In his own estimation of his mental powers (chanson 17), he dismisses as trifling the poets whose songs testified their joy in the smiles of their mistresses, by dressing up nature in her gayest robes, and revelling in her sweets; such ornaments are beneath his notice, for he tells us,

> *Feuille ne flors ne vaut riens en chantant,*
> Fors ke por defaute sans plus de rimoier,
> Et pour faire soulas moienne gent,
> Qui mauvais mos font sovent abaier.

Geoffroi Rudel would have taught him that such topics were not always sought as resources to cover poverty of invention, but that the poet might see in the book of nature types of that beauty which he

celebrated, and exhortations to the gaiety of heart which was most likely to attract its smiles;

Pro, ai del chan essenhadors
Entorn mi, et ensenhairitz;
Pratz e vergiers, albres e flors,
Voutas d'auzelhs,—e lays e critz,
Per lo dous termini suau.

In those of Thibaud's chansons which relate to the Crusades, there is a solemnity of feeling, which interests, because it appears to come from the heart; but in general his style is very quaint, dull and meagre. Perhaps one of his prettiest thoughts opens his 15th chanson, in which he alludes to the tradition that the nightingale sometimes so strains his throat in singing, as to fall dead at the foot of the tree on which he sits:

Li rossignols chante tant
Ke mors chiet de l'arbre jus;
Si belle mort ne vit nus,
Tant douce, ne si plaisant:
Autresi muir, en chantant a hauts cris,
Et si ne puis de ma dame estre vis.

Among the compositions of the earliest of the Norman French poets, there are a great many pastorals, with which the genius of the language very well accorded. They are not very easy to translate;—perhaps they are scarcely worth the trouble;—and one of them may therefore be quoted more properly here, as published by Roquefort from the MS. col-

lection of French poets before 1300, in the king's library.

A la fontenelle
Qui sort seur l'araine
Trouvai pastorelle
Qui n'iert pas vilaine,
Où ele se dementoit d'amors;
Dex quant vendra mon ami douz?
Merci, merci, douce Marote,
N'ociez pas vostre ami douz.

Dame de grant biauté,
Que ferai je lassé?
Se j'osasse amer
Je n'ose por mon pere;
A tort me chastiés d'amors,
Car j'amerai mon ami douz;
Merci, merci, douce Marote,
N'ociez pas vostre ami douz.

E li chevalier
Qui l'a escoutée,
S'estant arresté
Mist pié fors destrier;
Devant li se mist a genouz;
Bele, vez ci vostre ami douz:
Merci, merci, douce Marote,
N'ociez pas vostre ami douz.

Dites moy Marote
Serés vos m'amie?
A bele contele
Ne faudrois vos mie;
Chemise ridée et peliçon
Aurez, se je ai vostre amors;
Merci, merci, douce Marote,
N'ociez pas vostre ami douz.

Our selections from the Norman French poets, some of which have never before been in print, will be found to be very scanty; and it is difficult to have it otherwise, considering the little pains which have hitherto been taken, even in France, with this branch of its early literature.

A great deal might be done in this department, from the stores of the King's Library at Paris: but even in what will be found hereafter, and in the volumes which have just appeared, entitled "Les Poètes François depuis le XII^e^ Siècle jusqu'à Malherbe; Paris, 1824," (miserably deficient as those volumes are, in the exhibition of hitherto unpublished matter,) it will be plain that Boileau gave rather a precipitate judgement when he said—

> Villon * fut le premier, dans ces siècles grossiers
> Débrouiller l'art confus de nos vieux Romanciers.
> Marot bientôt après fit fleurir les Ballades, &c.
> * * * *
> Enfin Malherbe vint; et le premier en France
> Fit sentir dans les vers une juste cadence; &c.

A comparison of the Northern and Southern languages of France leads to the conclusion, that even in its best days the former was greatly the inferior in melody and power, though not perhaps in a peculiar naïveté and sweetness. Of these qualities, its

* Of the 15th century.

beautiful diminutives furnish the most obvious instance; and they were accordingly turned to excellent account by the poets, as in such lines as these:—

> Elle estoyt blanche comme let,
> Et doulce comme ung aignellet,
> Vermeillette comme une rose.

Unfortunately, these, its most redeeming qualities, have gradually given way before the pretended refinements, that at length produced the "belle langue" which is the most unpoetic of European tongues.

THE POETIC BATTLE OF WARTBURG.

See p. 208.

London. Published by Longman & Co. May 1826.

SECTION IV.

GERMANY.—Songs of the ancient Teutonic tribes.—Reign of Charlemagne.—Formation of the Teutonic languages.—Remains of the Carlovingian age.—Fragment of Hildibrant and Hathubrant.—The Church.—Louis le Debonnaire.—Otfried.—Song of Victory of Louis III.—Legend of St. George.—St. Anno.—Popular songs.—Suabian dynasty.—Frederic Barbarossa.—His connexion with the Berengars.—Henry VI.—Frederic II.—Conrad IV.—Conradin.—Decline of German poetry.—Cultivation of poetry at the minor courts, and in various dialects.—Low German.—Landgrave of Thuringia.—Romances of the Suabian age.—Nibelungen Lied.——Laurin.—Scandinavian mythology and poetry.—Harald the Valiant.—Lyric poetry of the Minnesingers.—Comparison with that of the Troubadours.

COTEMPORARY, or nearly so, with the most celebrated Troubadours flourished the Minnesingers of Germany. Their poetry was, till of late, almost unknown out of their native land; yet it is decidedly superior to that of their more fortunate rivals. It is the primary object of the present volume to introduce these early ornaments of a kindred tongue to the English reader; on which account he will perhaps excuse rather more particular details of their history.

Of all the branches of modern European poetry, it would be most ungracious to neglect that of the Teutonic nations; for to them may almost every where be traced the love and practice of song, even in

the days of what we are accustomed to call the deepest barbarism. It is hardly necessary to refer to the earliest observers of their manners, for the purpose of reminding the reader that the deeds of their warriors, as related in legendary songs, were always the delight of the ancient Germans. Time has laid its unsparing hand on much; yet some interesting and venerable reliques have survived; and there is little doubt that in the Nibelungen Lied, the Heldep-buch, and the Scandinavian Eddas and Sagas, we see, though in a comparatively modern dress, fragments of a remote and almost primitive antiquity; such, perhaps, as Jornandes heard and referred to as historical materials at the court of Theoderic, who, like Alfred and Charlemagne, seems to have encouraged the ancient vernacular literature of his country.

The reigns of Charlemagne and his successors in the Carlovingian dynasty, exhibit the first glimpses of distinct light thrown upon that portion of the ancient poetry of Germany which has survived to us. Though merciless and cruel in his views of territorial aggrandizement, Charlemagne had the discernment to see that the most politic plan for giving stability to his authority consisted in amending the religion and enlightening the understandings of the tribes over whom he triumphed in arms. Though his literary tastes were acquired in Italy, he had judgement enough to postpone the popular learning of the day

to the better object of bringing forward the indigenous literature of the countries which formed the immediate seat of his empire. With something of a prophetic perception of their future value, he sought to preserve even the "barbara et antiquissima carmina" of his native land, and to fix its grammar and language, rather than introduce either the favourite Latin, or the Romance dialect which had sprung from it and was spoken in the Gaulish provinces of his empire. Thus stability began to be given to the German tongue; and from that era we may date a gradual but steady progress towards maturity.

The two great original divisions of the Teutonic languages are:—first, the Low-German, which comprehends the dialects of the more northern tribes, such as the Anglo-Saxon, the old Friesic, the more modern Nether-Saxon, and the Belgic or Dutch:—second, the High-German, which prevailed in the south-west, and comprehends the Francic, Alemanic, Burgundian, Suabian, and other kindred dialects. These leading divisions are often very indistinctly marked in the most ancient specimens, probably from the multiplicity and confusion of provincial dialects; but as soon as the languages became fixed, or had been in any way devoted to literary purposes, the distinction became broad and obvious between the High-German or Suabian, in which the greater part of the poetry of the Minnesingers is written, and the Nether-Ger-

man, which in many respects (especially to English readers, from its affinity to the common parent the old Friesic or Saxon,) forms a more pleasing and certainly a smoother tongue, and one which we should perhaps have been inclined, a priori, to prefer to the one which in fact became the literary language of Germany. This was the Upper-Saxon dialect, which seems to have been cultivated during the reigns of the Saxon emperors, and which, in consequence mainly of its adoption by Luther at the era of the Reformation, obtained, and has ever since preserved, the ascendancy.

The language of the court and army of Charlemagne and his immediate successors was the Francic, or that branch of the High-German which had most assimilation to the lower dialects. However pure might have been the language of Clodwig [Clovis], the necessity or expediency which Charlemagne found for forming a new version of the Salic law, shows that great alterations had taken place in the popular tongue. The constant intercourse, under the Carlovingian monarchs, with the more Northern tribes, seems very much to have inclined the bias towards their dialect; and accordingly some of the earliest reliques of that age have a great portion of Low-German words. This is particularly the case with the fragment of Hildibrant and Hathubrant, which will be mentioned hereafter. From the 9th century, the modern High-

German, which is placed somewhat between the two extremes, appears gradually to develop itself, and to emerge from the weak and unsettled state in which it is before exhibited, till in the 11th century we find it (as in the legend of St. Anno) assuming a determinate character, approaching much nearer to the standard of Luther. During the same period, the rougher Alemanic or Suabian must also have been forming itself into that state of perfection in which it suddenly breaks upon us, as the court language of the Suabian dynasty, and the favourite dress of the poetry of the 12th and 13th centuries; while the Nether-German remained in the most pure and primitive form of all, as it appears in the specimens that have been preserved, which are not very numerous, the principal being romances.

In various periods during the Carlovingian dynasty we have valuable fragments of German poetry, which was gradually acquiring stability and importance, notwithstanding the endeavours of the learned to stop the progress of the new literature, by veiling every thing in their degenerate Latin. Many of the most valuable poetic monuments have been lost to the world by the laborious dullness of those who converted them into Latin prose; and many an author has deadened his fancy and destroyed his worth, by attempting to express in a dead language the thoughts and feelings which were the off-

spring of a new state of society. What a treasure might not the good nun Roswitha have left us on the deeds of the Saxon emperors, if her vanity had not induced her to display her learning in Latin verse!

Perhaps the most remarkable of all the remains of ancient German poetry is a fragment relating to the combat between Hildibrant and Hathubrant, which is assigned to the middle of the 8th century. The dialect in which it is written is the Francic, with a very great intermixture of the Nether-Saxon tongue. Bouterwek characterizes it as being just what one would suppose would be the result of a Nether-Saxon trying to write Francic. But this fragment is most valuable on account of the direct and indisputable testimony which it bears to the fact, that the romances of the proper German Cyclus of the Suabian age, as well as many of the Scandinavian demi-mythological fables, have their basis in the ancient popular songs and traditions, current in the age of Charlemagne, and probably long previously. It is, moreover, curious, from its being written in alliterative rhythm, a circumstance which has escaped the observation of the authors of the "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," who printed it in that work as prose.

The church was fated to become in Germany, as in many other countries, a powerful instrument, though against its will, in fixing and preserving the

rising popular tongue. Louis le Debonnaire piously banished from his court the vain themes which his father had loved to collect: but the multitude were not to be diverted from the objects which the bright recollections of their childhood and their dearest associations riveted in their minds. It therefore became politic to direct the current where it could not be stopt, and to apply the vehicle of popular rime to recording the deeds of holy men and scriptural histories; and thus by degrees to wean the populace from their heathen favourites. With this view, Louis caused a poetical translation or harmony of the New Testament to be made, which is supposed to be that of which part remains in the Cottonian Library, and of which other portions have been described, and selections given, from a MS. found by M. Gley at Bamberg, in his valuable little work "Langue et Literature des anciens Francs." With the same design Otfried a Benedictine monk of Weissenburg, who flourished between 840 and 870, lamenting over the vain and frivolous amusements of his flock, conquered his aversion for the rough idiom of the country, and published poetical versions of scriptural tales, which still exist, and were published by Schilter in his Thesaurus. Three stanzas of this work may be selected as a specimen:

Ludouuig ther snello
Thes uuisduames follo

Er Ostarrichi rihtit al
So Frankono Kuning scal.
* * *
Themo si jamer heili,
Joh salida gimeini,
Druhtin hohemo thaz guat
Joh freuuemo emmizen thaz muat.
* * *
Uuanta er ist edil Francko
Uuisero githanko
Uuisera redinu
Thaz duit er al mit ebinuu.

The following version by Herder, in modern German, will illustrate the affinity of the tongues:

Ludwig der schnelle
Der weisheitvolle,
Der Ostreich richtet all
Wie der Franken König soll.

Dem sei immer Heil
Und Seligkeit gemein,
Gott höh' ihm das Gut
Erfreu' ihm den Muth.

Denn er ist edler Franke
Weiser Gedanken
Weiser Reden
Thut alles mit Ebne (Gleichmuth).

In the same century we have a valuable Francic remain in the song of triumph for the victory of Louis III. over the Normans in 883. A few lines, selected as before, will suffice :—

Tho nam her skild indi sper,
Ellianlicho reit her :
Uuold her uuarer rahchon
Sina uuidarsahchon.

Tho ni uuas iz buro lango
Fand her thia Northmannon.
Gode lob; sageta.
Her siht thes her gereda.
Ther Kunig reit kuono,
Sang lioth frano,
Joh alle saman sungon
Kyrieleison!
Sang uuas gesungen,
Uuig uuas bigunnen,
Bluot skein in uuangon
Spilodunder Vrankon.

Which Bouterwek gives in modern German thus:—

Da nahm er Schild und Speer
Eilends ritt er;
Wollt' er wahrlich rächen
Seine widersacher (sich an ihnen).
Da nicht war es dauernd lange
Fand er die Normänner.
Gottlob! sagte (er).
Er sieht dass er begehrte.
Der König reitet kühn,
Sang (ein) Lied fromm,
Und alle zusammen sangen,
Kyrieleison!
Sang war gesungen,
Kampf war begonnen;
Blut schien in (den) Wangen
Spielender Franken.

The fragment of a song or legend in praise of St. George, published by Sandwig, probably belongs to the first half of the 10th century: and in the 11th we have the poem in honour of St. Anno bishop of Cologne (who died in 1075), or, more properly speaking, a chronicle of the world, into which the

poet's "copia verborum" seduced him from the more confined and less promising subject on which he professed to enter. In this piece are some passages of poetic merit; as, where the Deity is introduced viewing the perfection of his works, to which the sin of man alone is an exception: He sees—

Den manen unten sunnen
Die gebin ire liht mit wunnen.
Die sterrin bihaltent ire vart;
Si geberent vrost unte hizze so starc;
Daz fuir havit ufwert sinen zug,
Dunnir unte wint irin vlug,
Die wolken dragint den reginguz,
Nidir wendint wazzer irin vluz;
Mit blümin cierint sich diu lant,
Mit loube dekkit sich der walt,
Daz wilt habit den sinin ganc,
Scone is der vügilsanc:
Ein iwelich ding diu é noch havit,
Di emi Got van erist virgabit.
Newere die zuei gescephte,
Di her geschuph die bezziste,
Die virkerten sich in diu doleheit.

The joyous sun and moon
Their wonted light give forth.
The stars keep on their course,
And frost and heat their round;
Fire upwards holds its way,
Thunder and wind speed on,
And clouds pour forth their rain:
Down rushing stream the floods,
The flow'rs adorn the fields,
Green leaves bedeck the groves,
The beasts their courses run,
Soft rings the sweet bird's song:
All things obey the laws

That God creating gave,
Save the two latest born,
Whom noblest, best, he framed;
They spurn his high command,
And turn to folly's course.

In all this period it can hardly be supposed but that the taste for popular poetry remained uneffaced by the attempts made to divert it, and that it was not confined to themes of martial enterprise. As early as the reign of that gloomy monarch whom, with the French, we have honoured with the title of "Debonnaire," but whom the Germans more characteristically called "the pious," it appears to have been necessary to address a formal edict (see M. Schlegel's lectures) to the German nuns, restraining the indulgence of their passion for myne-lieder, or love-songs.

Thus was the ground gradually preparing for that bright harvest of lyric poetry which was so abundant in the 12th and 13th centuries. That the seed had been long and deeply sown, we cannot doubt:—"Il n'appartient qu'à Jupiter de faire sortir de sa tête une Minerve toute armée," as M. Roquefort observes in the preface to his Glossary: yet we are sometimes told that this early school of German poetry was merely imitative, as arising out of the alliance between the Suabian emperors and the princes of Provence. It is easy, however, to see that the same causes which aroused the mind in other countries, operated as powerfully in Germany (we might

go much further North if it were necessary); though foreign intercourse doubtless excited emulation, and even the disputes of Henry IV. and V. with the popes in the latter half of the 11th century, contributed to awaken the national spirit by bringing it into contact with that of other countries. The poetry of passion, of gay and gallant feeling, burst forth with all the freshness of novelty, and drove dullness into the shade for a season; though in Germany, as well as elsewhere, it returned when the flame of chivalry had died away, and the church resumed its benumbing influence over the mind.

During the reigns of the Saxon emperors, great progress was made in many departments of literature not within our view; but with the Suabian dynasty opens (at least so far as history has preserved its records) the splendid æra of early German poetry, which flourished most amidst the storms and dissensions that perpetually agitated the empire. In the beginning of the 12th century the Suabian family began its line of emperors with Conrad III. Frederic duke of Suabia, surnamed Barbarossa or Redbeard, was on the death of his uncle unanimously elected sovereign by the factious chieftains of Italy and Germany. For a time all seemed inclined to heal the divisions by which the empire had been so long harassed: but the Germanic body was composed of too discordant materials, and was too much

exposed to the restless intrigues of the Papal court, to remain long in peace. Frederic steered a manly course through the difficulties which every where assailed him. He was an able and active monarch, a skilful general, and a shrewd politician; one who would (like many of his successors) have been a far greater prince if he had not been encumbered by the oppressive appendage of Italian possessions and dignities. He caught the religious as well as chivalric feeling of the age; but experience taught him to distinguish his efforts in the holy wars above those of his predecessors, by greater prudence and a more discerning policy. Germany for a long time resisted the infatuation of the first Crusaders, and laughed at the needy crowds who thronged across its plains to their discomfiture: but Conrad was at last preached into joining the second crusade, after repeated and determined opposition to the calls of St. Bernard. In that expedition Frederic served, and was a witness of the disastrous consequences of improvident zeal. The Saxon historian says, "Si non fuit bona, prædicta expeditio, pro dilatatione terminorum vel commoditate corporum, bona tamen fuit ad multarum salutem animarum." [Otto Frising. de Gestis Frider. I. Imp. lib. 1. c. 60.] and we may add, that it taught Frederic, if he could not resist the torrent of zeal, at least to temper and direct it by prudence. Accordingly, that part of the third crusade which he led

was distinguished by discretion and politic precaution, more especially in preventing those from joining it who could not provide themselves with the means of subsistence, and in securing the respect and confidence of the people through whose territories he directed his march. If his sudden death in 1190 had not cut short his progress, the exertions of so able and experienced a general would most probably have been attended with highly successful results.

The rising spirit of German literature found in this great man, as in all the succeeding members of his family, a zealous patron: and in his reign the band of Minnesingers commences with Henry of Veldig, who is generally supposed to be the earliest in point of date of those names of note which have been handed down to us*. Frederic had led an active

* Yet it is singular that even Henry of Veldig is found lamenting over the degeneracy of his age from the good old rules of "rechten minne."

Do man der rehten minne pflag
Da pflag man ouch der ehren;
Nu mag man naht und tag
Die bösen sitte leren:
Swer dis nu siht, und jens do sach,
O we! was der nu clagen mag
Tugende wend sich nu verkeren!

Bodmer's Collection I. 19.

"When true love was professed, then also was honour cultivated; now by night and by day evil manners are learnt.—Alas! how may he who witnesses the present and witnessed the past, lament the decay of virtue!"

life,—he had roved through the fairy regions of the East, and had held his court in the poetic lands of the South of Europe; but while he admired the songs of the Provençaux, he loved and cultivated the muse of his native land; he rigidly enforced the use of its language for all court and state purposes; and Germany has to thank his patriotic hand for stimulating her sons to a literary emulation of their cotemporaries.

His niece Richilda having married Raymond Berengar III. count of Provence, Frederic became intimately connected with that court; and Nostradamus relates how, on the confirmation at Turin, in 1162, of the investiture of Provence, "l'illustre Remond Berenguier, (dict le jeune Comte de Barcelonne, et de Provence, fils de Berenguier Remond fils troisième de Doulce Comtesse de Provence,) accompagné d'une grande trouppe d'orateurs et poëtes Provensaux et des gentils-hommes de sa cour, avec la princesse Rixende ou Richilde sa femme, vint trouver l'Empereur, qui lui feist une grande bien-venue pour la bonne renommée de ses faits.—E le Comte Remond Berenguier feist reciter plusieurs beaux chants en langue Provensalle a ses poëtes en la presence de l'Empereur; lequel, du plaisir qu'il y print, estant esbay de leurs belles et plaisantes inventions et façon de rithmer, leur feist de beaux presens et feist une epigramme en langue Provensalle à la louange des toutes les nations qu'il avoit suyvies en ses victoires,

au quel epigramme il loue la langue Provensalle, disant ainsi ;

Plas my cavallier Francés,
E la donna Catallana,
E l'onrar del Gynoés,
E la cour de Kastellana,
Lo cantar Provensallés,
E la dansa Trevizana,
E lo corps Aragonés,
E la perla (?) Julliana,
Los mans e cara d'Anglés,
E lo donzel de Thuscana."

The sense, though it is not very clear to what some of the lines refer, may be thus expressed :—

I like a 'cavalier Francés'
And a Catalonian dame;
The courtesy of the Genoese,
And Castilian dignity;
The Provence songs my ears to please,
And the dance of the Trevisan;
The graceful form of the Arragoneze,
And the pearl (?) of the Julian;
An English hand and face to see,
And a page of Tuscany.

This little piece is curious as a commentary on the manners of the age. It has by some been ascribed to Frederic II.; but probability is much in favour of its being composed by (or, as may perhaps be suspected, *for*) the elder Emperor. His successors were all brought up more or less in the habits and literature of foreign lands, and were themselves composers in

more than one language. The epigram better suits the position of one who came fresh into the busy scene, and took a panoramic view of the objects that struck his attention; regarding the prospect around him as from a centre, without identifying himself with any part of it. Frederic I. was a very popular prince, and his memory is still preserved and connected with many local traditions. The ruins of his palace at Gelnhausen are said still to carry with them the traditional attachment of the neighbourhood; and even in the dark recesses of the Hartz forest, the legend places him in a subterranean palace in the caverns of the Kyffhaus mountain, his beard flowing on the ground, and himself reposing in a trance upon his marble throne, awakening only at intervals to reward any votary of song who seeks his lonely court.

Henry VI. partook of his father's spirit, and was himself a Minnesinger. But Frederic II. was the most ardent patron of literature. He was educated in Sicily, and his active exertions were directed towards imparting to his German subjects the benefit of the Southern schools. In Italy, where he almost constantly resided, he revived the academy of Salernum, promoted the study of Grecian and Arabic learning, and called to his court the most celebrated poets, orators and philosophers of the age. We have already seen one of his attempts in Italian song, of which he and his chancellor may be properly stiled

the founders, though it must be confessed that he does not personally appear calculated to shine as a poet. He was also a writer in the Provençal tongue; and that his exertions in exciting a literary taste in Germany were successful is amply proved by the numerous writers who adorned his reign.

He, too, took a part in the wars of the Holy Land; and it is perhaps not discreditable to him, that while other monarchs marched as slaves, obedient to the will of the bishop of Rome, and under the promise of a heavenly recompense, Frederic toiled with no other reward than the ban of excommunication. His prudent policy, in spite of the treachery and calumny of the church, achieved more for the cause of the Christian armies than the exertions of the most favoured and bigoted of their leaders. His fault, says Denina, was, that "he knew not how to adapt himself to the opinions of the age: perhaps the force of political circumstances was opposed to his vast designs, and thus it was that the glory he acquired was far beneath what his rare talents were capable of achieving." "Had he but been a true Catholic," says the Dominican Salimbene, "and loved God, *and the church*, and his own soul, few of the rulers of this world would have been worthy to have been accounted equal unto him."

Some valuable memorials of this great monarch's talents and zeal for the promotion of knowledge sur-

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

KIUNIG CHUONRAT DER JUNGE.

London, Published by Longman & Co. May 1825.

vive in the correspondence of his learned chancellor Pietro delle Vigne, or Petrus de Vineis,

> . . . colui che tenni ambo le chiavi
> Del cuor di Federigo.
>
> DANTE, INF. xiii.

Pietro, whom we have already seen associated with his master in Italian song, was an able political coadjutor, and annoyed the court of Rome with energetic replies to its bulls, comprising and anticipating many of the most weighty arguments which the reformers long afterwards employed against the temporal power and corruption of the church. His untimely fate left a stain on Frederic's fame; but historians seem agreed that he was falsely accused, and that the Emperor, when too late, lamented the precipitate credulity with which he had listened to the treacherous arts employed by their mutual enemies.

Misfortunes fell frequent and heavy on the succeeding members of the house of Suabia. Conrad IV. struggled vainly against the storm; and Conrad the Younger, or Conradin, another Minnesinger, succeeded to the crown of Sicily and Naples only to be murdered on the scaffold, in 1268, by the united efforts of the Pope and Charles of Anjou. Both these monarchs, even in the midst of their troubles, retained their poetic taste; and Conradin's funeral anthem was sung by the Troubadour Barthelemi Zorgi, "un gentils home de la ciutat de Venise."

43351

Rodolph of Hapsburgh succeeded to the Imperial crown in 1273; and, though the flame which the fostering care of the Suabian princes had nourished continued, to a certain extent, to burn on till the close of the century, it is plain that it was gradually expiring. About the period of Rodolph's accession, we find Conrad of Wurtzburg, one of the most highly gifted of the Minnesingers, lamenting over the declining popularity of his art in the following plaintive lines, which are introductory to his history of the Trojan war:—

Man wil ungerne hören
Wol sprechen unde singen;....
Drum wil ich doch nicht lasse
Min sprechen und singen abe,
Swie kleine ich darum lones habe....
Ob nieman lebte mer denne ich,
Doch seite ich, und sunge,
Dur das mir selben clunge
Min rede und miner stimme schal.
Ich täte alsam die nachtegal,
Dü mit ir sanges töne,
Ir selben dicke schöne,
Die langen stunden kürzet:
Swen über sie gestürzet
Wird ein gezelt von loube,
So wirt von ir das toube
Gefilde lout esschellet.

Unwilling stays the throng
To hear the minstrel's song;
Yet cease I not to sing,
Though small the praise it bring;

Even if on desert waste
My lonely lot were cast,
Unto my harp, the same,
My numbers would I frame;
Though never ear were found
To hear the lonely sound,
Still should it echo round;
As the lone nightingale
Her tuneful strain sings on
To her sweet self alone,
Whiling away the hour
Deep in her leafy bow'r,
Where night by night she loves
Her music to prolong,
And makes the hills and groves
Re-echo to her song.

The commencement of the 14th century witnessed a total revolution in the literature of Germany. John Hadloub may be considered as the last distinguished ornament of that school which Henry of Veldig commenced. The church regained its power over the mind, and the pedantic rules of the "meisters" (masters, or professors of poetry), and of their "song-schools" which now arose, effectually shackled the flights of fancy. Princes left off singing; courts no longer gathered together the minstrel tribes; Germany was cut off from its intercourse with Italy and Sicily; its freebooting age of second barbarism commenced; the whole face of society changed; and poetry speedily sunk, with very few exceptions, into the lowest depths of poverty and trifling.

It was not at the Imperial court only, however, that the taste for poetry was in its day of prosperity cultivated. "Germany about the time of Frederic II. began," as M. Schlegel in his Lectures observes, "to abound more than ever in petty princes; in sovereigns, whose dominions were too insignificant to occupy the whole of their attention, and who, therefore, were at full leisure to think of procuring for their courts the ornaments of music, poetry, and the arts. These were the real patrons of German literature. It was thus that vast assemblages of minstrels and poets were collected around the courts of the Landgrave of Thuringia, and still more of the Austrian Babenbergs." Suabia and German Switzerland seem to have been the principal sources whence the poetry of the Minnesingers flowed; and most of the authors from whom our specimens will be taken will be seen to spring from families belonging to those districts. St. Gall especially deserves commemoration, one of its abbots having even acquired fame for his skill in "Watchsongs," the nature of which class of compositions will be explained hereafter. But the same taste was more or less diffused all around, and there is every reason to believe that various other dialects were used by the Minnesingers, although nearly all that has come to us is Suabian. Henry of Veldig, for instance, was certainly a Low German.

Rudiger von Manesse * (a senator of Zurich in the beginning of the 14th century) and his sons are the persons to whose taste and industry we are said to be indebted for the splendid MS. collection of lyric poets, now in the King's Library at Paris, which was printed at Zurich by Bodmer in 1758. Of course they were likely to use the dialect of their own province: it seems very probable, however, that the same pieces circulated in various dialects, and that they owe their

* Rudiger appears to have been an extraordinary man, who not only maintained correspondence with the most eminent men of his country, but held at his house a sort of academy or conversazione, where all the pieces of poetry which could be collected were examined, and those which were thought worthy were enrolled in his "lieder-buoch." The singular history of the invaluable treasure so formed is given in Bodmer's preface to the volume of selections from it, which he first published at Zurich, in 1748, under the title of "Proben der alten Schwäbischen Poesie des 13ten Jahrhunderts." The mode in which this sort of family album was compiled is related in a song by Hadloub, one of the last of the Minnesingers, who was himself patronized by the family of Manesse. The MS. (or at least one which answers to the description, and the identity of which Bodmer and succeeding German antiquaries assume with great probability) is repeatedly noticed during the 16th century, as seen at different places by various inquirers into the antiquities of German song, and was at last discovered to have found its way to the King's Library at Paris. The songs of each poet are introduced by an illumination, in which singular attention is paid to heraldic decoration. Each design seems to represent an event of the poet's life, or to be in some way illustrative of his character. A few will be engraved in a reduced size as ornamental accompaniments to this volume.

permanent character to the whim of the collector, as many of the authors (particularly the one who stands in the highest rank—Wolfram of Eschenbach) were unable even to write. To this cause it is perhaps to be attributed, too, that all the pieces in the Manesse MS. bear the same apparent age and perfection of language, although the work of poets at least a century and half distant in point of time, and natives of provinces where various dialects were spoken. Some of the same songs are, it is said, to be found in the Thuringian dialect in a MS. collection at Jena. Kinderling, in his history of the Plattdeutsch, Nether-Saxon, or Low-German tongue (p. 262), mentions, among his specimens of the 13th century, three songs (published from a fragment of an ancient MS. collection of similar pieces), which are in Low-German dialects, and resemble closely the style and subjects of the Suabian minstrels. We may quote a couple of verses from the first, which is in the pure Nether-Saxon, and is probably the work of some Westphalian Minnesinger.

Twivel nicht du Leveste myn!
Lat allen Twivel ane syn!
Hert, Sinne unde Mot is allend dyn,
Des schaltu wol geloven my.

Ick wil min sulues nemen war,
Queme al de welt an eyner schar
Nen schoner konde komen da,
Ick wolde vil lever syn by dy. &c.

O doubt me not, thou dearest one!.
Mistrust and chilling fears away!
Heart, sense and mind are all thine own,
Believe the faithful words I say.

To this my faith I pledge and plight:
Were all the world outspread for me,
No fairer maid could bless my sight,
Far rather would I rest by thee.

And what if care, if trial come?
What matter, so thy love be nigh?
And rest thee sure, if hence I roam,
Still turns my heart to thee and joy: &c.

Accidental circumstances alone probably have deprived us of a great variety of early poetry, of the same character, in all the various Teutonic dialects. Even the Dutch was, according to Kinderling, very early cultivated as a poetic language; much earlier indeed than Mr. Bowring seems to have been aware in his "Batavian Anthology." Klaas Kolyn, a monk of Egmond, about 1176 wrote a "Geschichte Historiael-Rym der eersten Graven van Holland," which alludes to older writers, whom he calls "Runers;"

(Wan die Runers ie ontbraken
Tie woizen scriban irrer zaken,)

It speaks too of the "bards" who had sung the ravages of the Normans, and mentions that there had, even in the author's time, been "bards" in Egmond.

The court of Herman Landgrave of Thuringia was a principal focus of attraction for the literature of his age; and it is therefore improbable that the

Suabian dialect should have been exclusively adopted. Under the protection of this Landgrave (who died in 1228) flourished the celebrated Wolfram of Eschenbach, Henry of Ofterdingen, and Walther Vogelweide; and his court was the scene of the poetic battle or tournament of Wartburg, of which the German antiquarians have written so much, and as to which something may hereafter be said in this volume. Similar patronage was bestowed at the Austrian, Bohemian, and other courts; and the names of the Emperor Henry and some others of the Imperial family, of Count Frederic of Leiningen, Count Otho of Bottenloube, Otho IV. Margrave of Brandenburg, Wenzel king of Bohemia, Henry IV. duke of Breslau, John duke of Brabant, &c. make the German catalogue of royal and noble poets as distinguished as that of the Troubadours. The number of humbler minstrels is immense; but the few particulars of their personal history, which have been handed down, possess little interest. Our selections will exhibit specimens of the more celebrated; and of many even of these, little beside the name and date is now known.

During the Suabian æra were also written an immense number of romances, many of which possess great merit, and well deserve the laborious care bestowed of late by the German critics in editing and illustrating them. These are divided into two classes; the first being imitative of the French school;

BOMBAY BRANCH

MARGRAVE OTTO VON BRANDENBURG.

London. Published by Longman & Co May 1825.

the second founded on the ancient legends peculiar to the Teutonic nations. In the first department, the labours of the German writers were unwearied; and it is curious to observe how generally and cotemporaneously the subjects of romance (wherever we are to seek their origin) were diffused. The Troubadour Rambaud d'Orange (who died probably about 1173) makes distinct allusions to the well known adventures of the Romance of Tristan; a chanson of Chrestien de Troyes (who died in 1191) turns not an inelegant compliment from one of its incidents;

(Ainques dou buvraige ne bui
Dont Tristan fut empoisonez;
Car plus me fait aimer, que lui,
Fins cuers, et bone volentez.)

and Henry of Veldig, the earliest known Minnesinger, was as nearly as possible at the same time (perhaps earlier, and of course long before the German version.*

* These sheets were in the printer's hands when the new edition of Warton's History of English Poetry appeared. The reader is referred to it, not only in connexion with the observations made above on the romance of Tristan (on which subject an excellent note will be found, vol. i. p. 181), but in relation to the romances of Titurel and Parcival, mentioned sup. p. 24. "The editor," in his preface (p. 71), has given some highly interesting particulars of the nature and origin of Kyot's Provençal poem as preserved by the German translator. The opportunity must not be omitted of bearing testimony to the very great merit of this new edition of a work now rendered doubly valuable. "The editor" brings to his task that intimate

of the French romance was executed by Godfrey of Strasburg) making the same allusion in one of the most ancient German songs:

Tristan mueste sunder sinen dank
Stete sin der Kuniginne,
Wan in der poysun darzuo twanc
Mere dan diu kraft der minne:
Des sol mir diu guote danc
Wissen das ich solken tranc
Nie genam; und ich si doch minne
Bas danne er; und mac das sin
Wol getane,
Valsches ane,
La mich wesen din
Und bis du min!

No thanks to Tristan that his heart had been
Faithful and true unto his queen;
For thereto did a potion move
More than the power of love:
Sweet thought to me,
That ne'er such cup my lips have prest;
Yet deeper love, than ever he
Conceiv'd, dwells in my breast:
So may it be!
So constant may it rest!
Call me but thine
As thou art mine!

The Germans were not only translators of the French class of romances, but they employed the

---

acquaintance with ancient Scandinavian and German literature which is so necessary to a full development of the subject, but in which the French and English antiquaries have hitherto been lamentably deficient.

same materials in the composition of what may properly be called original productions. This is in general the character of the works of Wolfram of Eschenbach, which display great original genius at the same time that they excite astonishment at the extent of acquaintance with the literature both of North and South France, which could be acquired by a man, who, as has been before observed, is said not to have been able even to write. At the same time the appetite for romance which the prodigious quantity of works of this sort evinces, did not prevent the same writers from devoting equal attention to lais and fabliaux similar to those of the Trouveurs. In short, the literary tastes of every country of Europe seem to have been drawn into Germany as to a common centre, to be there pursued with a diligence and avidity almost incredible.

But the romances of the Teutonic cyclus are more valuable than those of the French school, inasmuch as they have served to preserve historical traditions, which most likely would have otherwise entirely perished. The selection of these materials for a new national class of romantic fiction, shows that the popular regard for such traditions was still strong, and at the same time evinces the original talent and discrimination of the men who were not content with imitating the fashionable topics of the day, but selected subjects of their own, so well calculated to perpetuate

their fame. These romances furnish an interesting field of inquiry; but it is of great extent, and one into which it is not prudent for him to trust himself who does not pretend to sufficient acquaintance with the subject to enable him to speak with confidence; the English reader, too, has fortunately a great store of valuable information on the subject in the "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," a book which has never received the support it deserves. A few observations on the most distinguished works of this sort seemed, however, proper, in order to fill up our sketch of the national literature of this singular period; and in the few extracts that will be made, the translations are in substance (though with some freedom of alteration) borrowed from that book.

The period in which is laid the historic basis of most of the Teutonic traditions adopted by the poets of the 12th and 13th centuries, extends as far back as that of Attila and the Hunnic conquest. That they were in substance tales which had formed the burden of popular songs in and probably long previously to the Carlovingian dynasty, seems highly probable; particularly since the discovery of the precious fragment of Hildibrant and Hathubrant, which has been before noticed as actually connecting and identifying the older traditions with the rifacciamenti of the Suabian times. These and similar stories had probably been preserved in Ostrogoth, Longo-

bard, Francic and Saxon song; they had been popular at the court of Theoderic, and afterwards at that of Charlemagne; and the same subjects found their way into the Sagas of Scandinavia, where many of them now exist in nearly the same form as in the Suabian romances.

The "Nibelungen Lied," or "Song of the Nibelungen," is not only the most ancient in date, but the most perfect in its epos and execution. Almost every thing in the story is in proper keeping. The manners, tone, thoughts and actions are in unison, and bear testimony to an antiquity far beyond that of the present dress of the poem: and if anachronisms in facts or allusions sometimes appear, they are rather to be attributed to the remodelling and dressing up than to the substance of the fable. Its author can only be conjecturally fixed upon. It appears that Pelegrin bishop of Passau, who died in 991, collected the then current legends of the Nibelungen, which he committed to writing in the favourite Latin tongue, with the assistance of his scribe Conrad, whose name has occasioned the Suabian poem to be sometimes ascribed to Conrad of Wurtzburg, who lived long after. The present poem is most likely, to a great extent, founded on this Latin version.

Whoever was the author, his powers are undoubtedly of a very high order; he belongs, apparently, to the middle of the twelfth century; and from inter-

nal evidence, Henry of Ofterdingen is thought to have the fairest claim, though the probable time of his life does not exactly agree with this hypothesis. Some of the descriptive passages in the poem are written with considerable spirit; as, for instance, the appearance of Crimhilt;

Nu gie diu minnechliche
Also der morgen rot
Tüt üz den trüben wolchen;
Da schiet von maneger not
Der si da trüg' in herzen,
Unt lange het getan;
Er sach die minnechlichen
Nu vil herlichen stan.

Ja luhte ir von ir waete
Vil manech edel stein,
Ir rosen-rotiu varwe
Vil minnechlichen schein:
Ob' iemen wunschen solde,
Der chunde niht geiehen,
Daz er ze dirre werelde
Het' iht schöneres gesehen.

Sam der liehte máne
Vor der sternen stat,
Der schin so lüterliche
Ab' den wolchen gat,
Dem stünt si nu geliche
Vor maneger vrowen güt;
Des wart da wol gehöhet
Den zieren helden der müt.

Now came that lady bright,
And as the rosy morn
Dispels the misty clouds,
So he who long had borne

Her image in his heart
Did banish all his care,
As now before his eyes
Stood forth that lady fair.

From her embroider'd vest
There glitter'd many a gem,
While o'er her lovely cheek
The rosy red did beam;
Whoe'er in raptur'd thought
Had imag'd lady bright,
Confess'd that lovelier maid
Ne'er stood before his sight.

And as the beaming moon
Rides high the stars among,
And moves with lustre mild
The mirky clouds along;
So, midst her maiden throng,
Up rose that matchless fair;
And higher swell'd the soul
Of many a hero there.

Next in value are the pieces usually passing under the general title of the "Helden-buch," or "Book of Heroes." The greater part is attributed to the unwearying hand of Wolfram of Eschenbach, the review of whose life and works would in fact embrace almost every branch of the literature of his age. One of the pieces, entitled "Laurin, the Dwarf King," or "The Little Garden of Roses," is the work of his cotemporary Henry of Ofterdingen, and might be selected as the most sprightly and elegant specimen of this class of ancient romantic fiction. Nothing can be more airy and romantic than some of the descriptions

which it contains; and it may perhaps be added, that it also derives very considerable interest from the circumstance of its embodying much of the leading machinery of our ancient popular stories, such as the magic girdle, the tarn-cap or invisible hat *, &c. Similt, the heroine of the poem, sallies forth with Dietlieb her brother to revel in the festive jollity of spring under the linden-tree in the forest. In the midst of their gaiety she is carried off by the little king, who avails himself of the aid of his tarn-cap, which has the power of rendering its wearer invisible, and bears off his prize to his retreat:

> He bore her to his cave
> Where he ruled in royalty
> O'er hill and valley wild
> With his little chivalry.

Dietlieb and his knights pursue; and in their inquiries after the pygmy king, are informed of his exploits and power. They learn, especially, that his great pride is in a magnificent garden of roses, round which is

---

* For a great deal of valuable information on these points I must again refer to the excellent preface of the editor of Warton. The little collection of "German Popular Stories," which he has thought worthy of his notice, only touched on a subject highly interesting no doubt, but requiring for its full development a depth of research far beyond my means: I would gladly leave it in the able hands into which my friend "the editor's" preface shows that it has fallen.

drawn the protection of a silken line; and that any luckless wight who trespasses on his parterre rues the consequences of his aggression.

The tale is repeated to Dietrich [Theoderic] of Bern [Verona] and Wittich his friend, and they immediately determine to brave the little monarch by rifling his roses. On their arrival at the spot, however, Dietrich is ravished with the beauty of the scene: not so Wittich, who commences the work of destruction; the pride of the garden soon lies prostrate, and the heroes repose on the earth musing on their doughty exploit, when on a sudden the monarch appears;

Behold there came a little king
In warlike manner dight,
A king he was o'er many a land,
And Laurin was he hight.

...

A lance with gold entwined round
The little king did bear,
And on the lance a pennon gay
Wav'd flutt'ring in the air.

And thereupon two greyhounds fleet
Right seemly were pourtray'd,
And alway look'd as though they chas'd
The roebuck through the glade.

His courser bounded like a fawn
With golden trappings gay,
And costly gems, too, sparkled round,
Bright glittering as the day.

And in his hands the hero grasp'd
Right firm the golden rein;

With ruby red the saddle gleam'd
As he prick'd o'er the plain.....
Around his waist a girdle fair
He wore of magic might,
The power of twelve the stoutest men
It gave him for the fight.
Cunning he was and deep in skill,
And when his wrath arose
The foe must be of mickle power
That could withstand his blows.....
And tall at times his stature grew
With spells of grammarie,
Then to the noblest princes he
A fellow meet might be.....
A crown of purest gold he bore
Upon his helmet bright,
With richer gems or finer gold
No mortal king is dight.
Upon the crown and on the helm
Birds sang their merry lay,
The nightingale and lark did chaunt
Their melodies so gay.
It seem'd as on the greenwood tree
They tun'd their minstrelsy,
By hand of master were they wrought
With spells of grammary.

A savage combat ensues; and when the king is obliged to yield to the superior force of Dietrich, he has recourse to the friendly tarn-cap, which removes him from sight, and enables him to strike with greater effect. Of this resource, however, accident deprives him, and at length a reconciliation is effected between the contending parties. The champions are then hos-

pitably welcomed by the monarch at his palace in the forest, which is described in some very pretty poetry, though at too much length for our limits:

There all the livelong night and day
The birds full sweetly sang,
And through the forest and the plain
Their gentle measures rang.

For there they tun'd their melody,
And each one bore his part,
So that with merry minstrelsy
They cheer'd each hero's heart.

And o'er the plain there ranged free
Of beasts both wild and tame,
In merry gambols there they play'd
Full many a lusty game. . . . .

The meadows, too, so lovely seem'd,
The flowers bloom'd so fair,
Certes the lord who ruled that plain
Could know nor woe nor care. &c.

It has already been remarked that several of the heroic traditions which form the burden of the German romances are to be found also in the early remains of Scandinavian literature; and it may be added that many of these subjects are there elevated into a mythological character, not uncommonly acquired where the object is removed by a convenient separation in point of time and space. All have probably one common terrestrial origin, though of a remote traditional antiquity; and it seems most likely that the German antiquarians are correct in attributing the

literary cultivation of such materials in the furthest North to the influence of early German example *. But the opportunity may be here taken of remarking that there are very early proofs of the original prevalence of poetic taste even among the most roving tribes of the North; and the song of Harald the Hardy, of the middle of the 11th century, precedes in date any of our specimens, either of Troubadour or German minstrelsy. Perhaps it would have found a more appropriate place in our notice of the Northern French poetry; for the reader will recollect that it belongs to the parent stock of those Normans who were then domesticated in France; and he will easily see that though they were about commencing there a new school of the art in a tongue adopted from their conquered subjects, yet the *taste* was one anterior to their migrations, only now transplanted into a more fruitful soil, and placed under the more genial influences of increasing civilization. While Harald was roaming on adventures that almost identify him with the Vikingr, and echoing the strains of a Scald, part of the same parent stock, "refined without being corrupted in a warmer climate," was, under Robert Guiscard, founding an active and enlightened domi-

* See a paper by F. H. von der Hagen in the second volume of the "Museum für Altdeutsche Literatur;" see also Schlegel's Lectures, and the "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities."

nion in Italy and Sicily, which, before the end of the century, comprised within its limits the trade of Amalphi, as well as the school of the united wisdom of the Christian and Mahometan world at Salernum, and soon completed the circle of Teutonic influence by co-operating with the policy and example of the German emperors to bring forward, as we have seen, the vernacular literature of Italy.

Harald, it is perhaps needless to say, was a Norwegian prince, who led his followers even to Africa, Constantinople, and the Holy Land; and his song is inspired by Ellisif or Elizabeth, the daughter of Jarisleif, a Russian prince. Mr. Herbert, in the second volume of his "Miscellaneous Poetry," has directed his talents to the illustration of Harald's muse; and from him we may quote the following elegant and spirited translation from the Icelandic of the Knytlinga Saga as printed in Bartholinus. His version is taken because it would be presumption to attempt another, and yet the piece can hardly be omitted altogether, in taking a general view of the early efforts of the barbaric schools of poetry.

My bark around Sicilia sail'd;
Then were we gallant, proud and strong;
The winged ship, by youths impell'd,
Skimm'd, as we hoped, the waves along:
My prowess, tried in martial field,
Like fruit to maiden fair shall yield!
With golden ring in Russia's land
To me the virgin plights her hand.

Fierce was the fight on Trondheim's heath;
I saw her sons to battle move;
Though few, upon that field of death
Long, long, our desperate warriors strove:
Young from my king in battle slain
I parted on that bloody plain.
With golden ring in Russia's land
To me the virgin plights her hand.

With vigorous arms the pump we plied,
Sixteen (no more) my dauntless crew,
And high and furious wax'd the tide;
O'er the deep bark its billows flew;
My prowess, tried in hour of need,
Alike with maiden fair shall speed.
With golden ring in Russia's land
To me the virgin plights her hand.

Eight feats I ken;—the sportive game—
The war array—the fabrile art—
With fearless breast the waves I stem—
I press the steed—I cast the dart—
O'er ice on slippery skates I glide—
My dexterous oar defies the tide.
With golden ring in Russia's land
To me the virgin plights her hand.

Let blooming maid and widow say,
Mid proud Byzantium's southern walls
What deeds we wrought at dawn of day!
What falchions sounded through their halls!
What blood distain'd each weighty spear!
Those feats are famous far and near.
With golden ring in Russia's land
To me the virgin plights her hand.

Where snow-clad Uplands rear their head,
My breath I drew mid bowmen strong;
But now my bark, the peasants' dread,
Kisses the sea its rocks among;

Mid barren isles, where ocean foam'd
Far from the tread of man I roam'd.
With golden ring in Russia's land
To me the virgin plights her hand.

But it is time to direct our attention to the lyric poetry of the Minnesingers, which should form the more peculiar object of these inquiries. Of this it may with truth be said that it combines and improves upon all the pleasing features of the Provençal muse, and is at the same time highly and distinctively characteristic of the more subdued and delicate tone of feeling which inspired the German minstrels. Indeed, nothing can breathe more clearly the sentiments of innocent and tender affection than many of these little productions. Narrow and circumscribed as the field of such poetry may appear, its charms are diversified by the varied attractions of natural beauty and the impassioned tones of feeling. Admiration of his lady's perfections, joy in her smiles, grief at her frowns, and anxiety for her welfare, are expressed by the poet in a thousand accents of simplicity and truth; and if extravagance or affectation sometimes offends, it ought to be recollected that the bounds of taste were not then so accurately defined, nor the gallant spirit of chivalry so chastened as to render unnecessary some allowance for the extravagance of a principle which was in the main generous, and at any rate conferred incalculable blessings on society, in

advancing the interests and elevating the station of its most defenceless portion.

It is surely difficult in the perusal of many of these ancient songs to abstain from partaking in the joyous hilarity, the frolic festivity of spirit, with which they seem to revel in the charms of nature as clothed in her most smiling forms. The gay meadows, the budding groves, the breezes and flowers

. . . di primavera candida e vermiglia,

sparkle in the song; and the buoyant effervescence of youthful gaiety is often in delightful keeping with the bounding rhythm and musical elegance of the verse. When we were noticing king Thibaud's supercilious depreciation of such minstrels as borrowed the ornaments, and often the subjects of their poetry, from the natural objects around them, we might have placed by the side of the Troubadour whom we then quoted in their justification the following verse by the Minnesinger Von Buwenburg, as further exemplifying the spirit with which these topics were often selected and dwelt upon by them in the fullness of the heart, not in the practised skill of a spinner-out of conceits.

Say, what is the sparkling light before us
O'er the grassy mead, all bright and fair,
As the spirit of mirth did wanton o'er us?
Well, well, I see that summer is there;
By the flow'rs upspringing, and birds sweet singing,
And animals playing:—and, lo! the hand

Of nature her beautiful offspring bringing
All ranged in their seasons at her command!
May heav'n complete thee, thou fair creation,
For such pleasures as these are joy's true foundation!

The compositions of the Minnesingers display a great deal of the same blending of religious with amatory ideas, and of confusion in the objects of the poet's adoration, which have been observed among the Troubadours, and which are characteristic of the chivalric spirit of the age. The fashion of the day gave an unnatural elevation to the immediate subjects of the minstrel's idolatry; and from this arose a correspondent familiarizing degradation of the images, to a comparison with which he sought to raise his terrestrial divinity. The Virgin, the angels and paradise, nay even the Supreme Being, are sometimes placed on an equal, and not more than an equal, footing of honour with the immediate object of adoration, yet perhaps with no intentional irreverence in the mind of the ardent poet. A curious passage from the Lai d'Oiselet (Barbazan, III. 119) will illustrate the naïveté of the philosophy with which these subjects were expounded:—

Et por verité vos recort,
Diex et amors sont d'un accort;
Diex aime sens et honorance
Amors ne l'a pas en viltance;
Diex het orgueil et fauceté
Et amors aimme loiauté;

Diex aime honor et cortoisie
Et bone amor ne het-il mie;
Diex escoute bele proiere,
Amors ne la met pas arriere.

Instances of the strangest confusion of these topics are abundant among the Troubadours; and the following verse from Christian von Lupin may serve as a specimen of it among the Minnesingers:

They say that joy's high dwelling place is heaven:
Joy is where man's delight to him is given:
Then for *her* sake my feet shall journey where
My charmer is, for paradise is there:
If but her blessed smile may light on me,
Here pleas'd on earth I'll dwell—for here my heaven will be.

There are, however, among the lyric pieces of the Minnesingers some which, for the age, possess considerable merit, and which are devoted entirely to religious topics, such as the praises of the Virgin or of a favourite saint. Brother Eberhart of Sax is the author of an ode to the former, which has some power; and another singer devoted himself to a rifacciamento of Solomon's Song, which Herder introduced to public notice among his "Lieder der Liebe." Der Marner is the author of a sonnet, which, being the shortest piece of the sort, may be here translated as a specimen.

Maria! Virgin! mother! comforter
Of sinners! queen of saints in heav'n that are!
Thy beauty round the eternal throne doth cast
A brightness that outshines its living rays:
There in the fullness of transcendent joy
Heaven's king and thou sit in bright majesty:

Would I were there, a welcom'd guest at last
Where angel tongues re-echo praise to praise!
There Michael sings the blessed Saviour's name
Till round the eternal throne it rings once more,
And angels in their choirs with glad acclaim,
Triumphant host, their joyful praises pour:
There thousand years than days more short appear,
Such joy from God doth flow and from that mother dear.

But a considerable difference may be observed in the extent to which the German and the Provençal poets are, generally speaking, accustomed to go in their idolatry of the fair sex; the former appearing usually to restrain their mode of expressing their attachments within much more natural and reasonable bounds, and to content themselves with assigning to woman a superior rank in the scale of society, without bowing so lowly down to her temporal and spiritual authority, or erecting such an extravagant scale of dominion as it pleased the minstrels of Provence to assign to her. Perhaps the cause of this distinction may to a considerable extent be pointed out. In the South, this exaltation of the female sex was a recent innovation,—a feeling which had seized on the mind with the ardour of novelty,—not a rule of action founded on social principles. The Roman institutions had there suffered much less adulteration from the leaven of Teutonic innovation; and it does not appear that women had any where, but among the Germans, occupied that position in society which the latter seem always to have conceded to them. But with the ascendancy of chivalric feelings a spirit of devotion for

the sex came into fashion in France, and, like many other fashions, was soon carried to a most extravagant excess. Men thought they could never prostrate themselves too low before the idols "to which they bowed their knee." She who had been treated as a slave became on a sudden a divinity; to her were ascribed all the attributes of sovereignty; and courts of justice even were created to enforce obedience to a new code of laws, and to dignify all sorts of caprice with the mimic consequence of judicial solemnity.

These follies certainly at any rate never attained such a height in Germany *. Its inhabitants were not, in the 11th or 12th century, to be taught for the first time the respect and esteem due to the female sex. Even in barbarian days, the great observer Ta-

* The following whimsical and otherwise worthless stanzas of Hugh of Werbenwag (about 1250) constitute the only intimation that occurs to our remembrance of a temporal jurisdiction acknowledged or appealed to by the German Troubadours in affairs of the heart; and even here the complaint is to no authority constituted for the especial purpose, but to the king (Conrad), with a further appeal to the emperor, and thence in due gradation to the pope; subject also most curiously to the acknowledged right of the accused to the legal *wager of battel* if claimed.

If such her purpose last, I'll send
A message to my lady,
To warn her that my suit I'll ply
Unto the king to aid me;
I'll say she wins and wears my gage,
Yet will she not my pain assuage;
And if he hears me not, I'll seek the emperor's court.

citus had extolled an example which Rome might have copied with advantage: the new spirit of chivalry and the progress of civilization only mellowed ancient sympathies, and aroused affections of a purer and more social description than those which are the general characteristics of cotemporary French society and literature.

The lyric poetry of the two countries is strongly marked by this distinction. The German is more chaste, tender and delicate. The Troubadours much

---

Yet fear I when we both appear
Battel must waged be;
If she on oath deny the truth
Of the words she spoke to me,
Then must I strive with her in fight:
So is the law; but shall I smite
That lady? Yet how hard to let her strike me dead.

Yes, if king Conrad listen not,
Or hearing will not heed,
Then will I seek the Emperor's grace,
For he hath heard the deed:
And still if justice be not *there*
I'll to Thuringia's prince repair,
Or to the Pope, with whom justice in mercy dwells.

LADY.

Dear friend, thy anger waxes high,
To kings and emperors flying;
Go not to Rome, but rest at home,
For hope on me relying:
The light of faithful love pursue,
And follow still with service true;
Love without law is best: such would *my* counsel be.

oftener require the pruning hand of the selector for modern eyes, whenever they emerge from their cold and fanciful conceits. In no class of the poetry of the Troubadours is the excess of refinement on "passages of love" more apparent than in their tensons. In these, the Germans have the credit of being peculiarly deficient. The "Battle of Wartburg," almost the only German piece that has any similitude to the tenson, is a tournament in song, conducted (or represented to have been conducted) before the Thuringian court by Wolfram of Eschenbach, Walther Vogelweide, Reinmar the elder, Henry of Rispach or the virtuous clerk, Henry of Ofterdingen, and Klingesor of Ungerland; but the subjects of discussion between these worthies have nothing in common with those which interested the Provençaux.

The German songs, moreover, are less metaphysical and spiritualized. The scholastic subtleties and casuistries, which the Italians inherited from the Troubadours, very seldom form any feature of the Northern poetry. In this respect, it may be ruder, but it undoubtedly breathes more of feeling, more of love for the beautiful in nature, and more of joy in her perfections. Similar ideas, undoubtedly, often adorn the songs of the Troubadours, but they are generally introduced merely in a sort of proem, unconnected with the rest of the subject, and from which the poet speedily plunges into a more artificial strain. There

are very few, if any, instances among them of entire songs of joy, floating on in buoyancy of spirit, and glowing with general delight in natural objects, in the bursting promise of spring, or the luxuriant profusion of summer, like some of those which will be selected from the works of the Minnesingers.

On the other hand, the Provençal poets are much more classical in their illustrations. Such images as the following are of very frequent recurrence.—The moth and the candle, in Folquet de Marseille:

Ab bel semblan que fals' amors adutz
S'atrai ves leis fols amans e s'atura,
Co'l parpaillos, qu'a tan folla natura
Que s fer el foc per la clardat que lutz.

The self-sacrificing waste of the candle in the service of others, by Raimond de Thoulouse:

Atressi cum la candela,
Que si meteyssa destruy,
Per far clardat ad autruy,
Chant, on plus trac greu martire,
Per plazer de l'autra gen.

The sun-flower, by Peyrols:

Li oill del cor m'estan
Vas lei qu'aillors no vire,
Si qu' ades on qu'ieu m'an
La vei e la remire,
Tot per aital semblan
Com la flors qu'om retrai,
Que totas horas vai
Contra 'l soleill viran.

The metaphorical language of the Minnesingers is often spirited; thus Henry of Morunge sings—

Where now is gone my morning star?
Where now my sun? Its beams are fled.
Though at high noon it held afar
Its course above my humble head,
Yet gentle evening came, and then
It stoop'd from high to comfort me;
And I forgot its late disdain,
In transport living joyfully.

And again the same author—

Mine is the fortune of a simple child
That in the glass his image looks upon;
And by the shadow of himself beguil'd
Breaks quick the brittle charm, and joy is gone.
So gaz'd I—and I deem'd my joy would last—
On the bright image of my lady fair:
But ah! the dream of my delight is past,
And love and rapture yield to dark despair.

In the construction of their verses, the Germans seem entitled to the merit of great originality. Had they borrowed servilely from the Troubadours, no features of their poetry would have been so certain of transmission as the measure and the music; yet the German system of versification is almost universally different, and must have required tunes as various. The Iambus is the only foot of the Troubadours; the Minnesingers have almost as many as the classical writers. The following song by Conrad of Wurtzburg is translated into a measure which will

give an idea of the intricate style of some of the Minne-lieds:

See how from the meadows pass
Brilliant flowers and verdant grass;
All their hues now they lose: o'er them hung
Mournful robes the woods invest
Late with leafy honours drest:
Yesterday the roses gay blooming sprung,
Beauteously the fields adorning;
Now their sallow branches fail:
Wild her tuneful notes at morning
Sung the lovely nightingale,
Now in woe, mournful, low, is her song.

Nor for lily nor rose sighs he,
Nor for birds' sweet harmony,
He to whom winter's gloom brings delight.
Seated by his leman dear
He forgets the alter'd year;
Sweetly glide at eventide the moments bright.
Better this than culling posies;
For his lady's love he deems
Sweeter than the sweetest roses;
Little he the swain esteems
Not possessing that best blessing—love's delight.

The dactylic measure used by some of these songsters (particularly by Ulrich of Lichtenstein), was peculiarly adapted to their hymns of joy. Its harmony, and the degree of perfection to which it was carried, would be hardly credited, if we had not before us the originals, free from any sort of doubt as to their authenticity. Bouterwek observes, that modern Germany cannot perhaps show a more perfect speci-

men of this sort of versification than the following, with the exception perhaps of the last line.

Was klagest du, tumber,
Vil seligen kumber,
Den ich durch Got dir geraten han;
Das du der guoten
Der reine gemuoten
Werest mit truwen vil untertan?
Tuot dir den tot
Vil suesse not,
So senfte swere,
So lieblich twanc
We, zwifelere!
So bist du vil krank.

That the songs were sung, and accompanied by musical instruments and by dancing, is plain, from the repeated allusions to both. The song frequently concludes with the excuse that "the string is broken,"

Nu ist der seite enzwei.

One example may suffice of the metre of some of these dance or chorus songs, in which lightness and good humour seem to have been more consulted than any higher sort of poetic excellence:

Walt mit grüner varwe stat;
Nachtegal,
Süssen schal,
Singet, der vil sanfte tüt:
Meien blüt
Hohen müt
Git den vogellin überal.
Heide breit
Wol bekleit

Mit vil schonen blümen lit;
Summer zit
Vröide git,
Davon suln wir sin gemeit.....
Fröide und fröiderich gemüte
Suln wir diesen sumer han:
Heide und anger schone in blüte,
Da stent blümen wolgetan;
Uf der heide und in dem walde
Singent kleinú vogellin,
Susse stimme, manigvalde;
Des suln wir in froiden sin.....
Nu singen
Nu singen!
Dannoch harte erspringen
Den reigen,
Den reigen,
Pfaffen und leigen! &c.

We seem to hear the string of the 'geige' itself twang to the rythm of such lines as occur a little further on:

Verrirret,
Verrirret,
Ist der seite erkirret:
Nu hören!
Nu hören!
Er wil uns ertören. &c.

The Troubadours, on the other hand, generally move in a measured, sedate, and plaintive tone.

In comparing the Minnesingers with these their rivals, it may also be worthy of remark that the artificial classifications of the French minstrels are with the former almost entirely wanting. They have, as was before observed, scarcely any tensons, and no

wearisome distinctions of planhs, sixtines, descorts, refrains, bref-doubles, &c. The envoi too, an almost invariable conclusion of a chanson, is wholly wanting. The subject in fact, not the form, characterizes the German song; and every poet gives vent to his joys or his sorrows in such strains as may be most accordant to his feelings, unshackled by such laws as were imposed in the decay of the art, when the 'meisters' or 'masters,' as we shall see hereafter, began to make a trade of the muse.

It may, perhaps, be asked, why no notice is taken in these observations of early English poetry. To this it may be answered;—first, that to do so, we must enter upon a field in which, in order to proceed satisfactorily, more would be required than the present limits would allow:—secondly, that several works are open to every English reader which enter fully into the early poetic history of his country, though perhaps not so fully as might be due to the purely English or Saxon source of our literature, and the gradual formation of our genuine language as distinguished from its French adulterations:—and thirdly, that the greater part of the poetry which appeared in England cotemporaneously with the period under consideration, belongs to the Anglo-Norman school already noticed. The

risk, however, shall be run of incurring blame for reprinting what has been rendered familiar by several preceding publications, for the sake of recalling the reader's attention, in this connection, to the old song to the cuckoo, [from the Harleian MSS. 978. f. 5.] which is assigned by Warton to the early part of the 13th century. It is worthy of notice, not only as a connecting step of gradation between the Anglo-Saxon and English tongues, but as being, in poetic character, a genuine offshoot of the Teutonic school, resembling in many of its features the kindred songs of the German Minnesingers. We could almost fancy one of those minstrels, singing in nearly the same words and measure:

Sumer is i-cumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed,
And bloweth med,
And springeth the wde nu:
Sing cuccu! cuccu!

Awe bleteth after lamb,
Lhouth after calve cu;
Bulluc sterteth,
Bucke verteth,
Murie sing cuccu!
Cuccu, cuccu!
Wel singes thu cuccu,
Ne swik thou nauer nu!
Sing cuccu nu!
Sing cuccu!

[Summer is come in, loud sing cuckoo! groweth

the seed, and bloweth the meed, and springeth the wood now: sing cuckoo! The ewe bleateth after the lamb, loweth after the calf the cow, the bullock starteth, the buck verteth (goes to harbour in the fern—*Ritson*), merry sing cuckoo, cuckoo! cuckoo! Well singest thou cuckoo, cease thou never now! &c. —'Swic' seems to be the German 'schweige,' the 'swic' or 'swig' of the Suabian Minnesingers.]

SPECIMENS.

THE MINNESINGERS.

Pro ai del chan essenhadors
Entorn mi, et ensenhairitz,
Pratz e vergiers, albres e flors,
Voutas d'auzelhs, e luys e critz—

GEOFFROI RUDEL.

MINNESINGERS.

COUNT CONRAD OF KIRCHBERG.

"GRAVE Chuonrat von Kilchberg," (or Kirchberg,) in Suabia, sung in the latter part of the 12th century. The Manesse MS. contains several songs by him.

Meige ist komen in dú lant,
Der uns ie von sorgen bant:
Kinder, kinder, sint gemant!
Wir sun schouwen wunne manigvalde;
Uf der liehten heide breit
Da hat.er uns fúr gespreit
Manig bluemelin gemeit,
Erst bezeiget in dem gruenen walde;
Da hört man die nahtegal,
Uf dem bluenden rise,
Singen lobelichen schal, &c.

MAY, sweet May, again is come,
May that frees the land from gloom;
Children, children, up, and see
All her stores of jollity!
On the laughing hedgerow's side
She hath spread her treasures wide;

She is in the greenwood shade,
Where the nightingale hath made
Every branch and every tree
Ring with her sweet melody;
Hill and dale are May's own treasures;
Youths rejoice! In sportive measures
Sing ye, join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May!

Up then, children! we will go
Where the blooming roses grow;
In a joyful company
We the bursting flowers will see:
Up, your festal dress prepare!
Where gay hearts are meeting, there
May hath pleasures most inviting,
Heart and sight and ear delighting;
Listen to the birds' sweet song,
Hark! how soft it floats along:
Courtly dames! our pleasures share;
Never saw I May so fair;
Therefore dancing will we go;
Youths rejoice, the flow'rets blow!
Sing ye! join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May! . . . .

Our manly youths—where are they now?
Bid them up and with us go

To the sporters on the plain:
Bid adieu to care and pain,
Now thou pale and wounded lover!
Thou thy peace shall soon recover.
Many a laughing lip and eye
Speaks the light hearts' gaiety;
Lovely flowers around we find
In the smiling verdure twin'd,
Richly steep'd in May-dews glowing;
Youths rejoice, the flowers are blowing!
Sing ye! join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May!

O, if to my love restor'd,—
Her, o'er all her sex ador'd,—
What supreme delight were mine!
How would care her sway resign!
Merrily in the bloom of May
Would I weave a garland gay.
Better than the best is she,
Purer than all purity;
For her spotless self alone
I will praise this changeless one;
Thankful or unthankful, she
Shall my song, my idol be;
Youths then join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry merry May!

HENRY OF RISPACH,

OR

THE VIRTUOUS CLERK.

HENRY is commonly called "Der tugendhafte Schreiber," or the virtuous clerk. How or why he acquired that appellation does not appear. He flourished in the latter half of the 11th century, and as late as 1207, the date of the poetic Battle of Wartburg, where he was one of the combatants. The original of the following song is perfect and melodious in its rhythm as well as pleasing in its conception.

Es ist in den walt gesungen
Das ich ir genaden klage
Dú min herze hat betwungen
Und noh twinget alle tage.

Mir ist sam der nahtegal,
Dú so vil vergebne singet,
Und ir doh ze leste bringet
Niht wan schaden ir suezer schal.

Was tougt in dem wilden walde
Kleiner vogelline sanc
Und ir döne manigvalde?
Wer seit in der vuoge dank?

Dankes ist so toub der walt,
So ist das wilde waltgesinde
Von der wilde gar ze swinde
Húbeschem lone niht gestalt.

THE woodlands with my songs resound,
As still I seek to gain
The favour of that lady fair
Who causeth all my pain.

My fate is like the nightingale's
That singeth all night long,
While still the woodlands mournfully
But echo back her song.

What care the wild woods as they wave
For all the songster's pains?
Who gives her the reward of thanks
For all her tuneful strains?

In dull and mute ingratitude
Her sweetest songs they hear,
Their tenants roam the desert wild,
And want no music there.

WOLFRAM OF ESCHENBACH.

SOMETHING has before been said of Wolfram of Eschenbach (or Eschelbach), the most fertile of the Minnesingers and romance writers of his day. His course lies through the last half of the 12th century into the beginning of the 13th, he being one of the dramatis personæ at the battle or poetic tournament of Wartburg in 1207. He was the youngest son of a nobleman of Switzerland, or perhaps the Palatinate: he led the roving life of a minstrel knight, and survives not only in his own varied works, but in the eulogies of his cotemporaries. Songs were not his forte; and the following is introduced more to give an opportunity for commemorating one of the most extraordinary names in early European literature, than for its intrinsic merit. A tracing from the Manesse MS. represents him armed, with his page and horse properly accoutred. His arms are given with the usual precision of that MS.

Möht ich die selde reichen dú so hoh
Ob miner fröide stet gezilt, &c.

Would I the lofty spirit melt
Of that proud dame who dwells so high,
Kind heaven must aid me, or unfelt
By her will be its agony.
Joy in my soul no place can find:
As well might I a suitor be
To thunderbolts, as hope her mind
Will turn in softer mood to me.

Those cheeks are beautiful, are bright
As the red rose with dewdrops grac'd;
And faultless is the lovely light
Of those dear eyes, that, on me plac'd,
Pierce to my very heart, and fill
My soul with love's consuming fires,
While passion burns and reigns at will;
So deep the love that fair inspires!

But joy upon her beauteous form
Attends, her hues so bright to shed
O'er those red lips, before whose warm
And beaming smile all care is fled.
She is to me all light and joy,
I faint, I die, before her frown;
Even Venus, liv'd she yet on earth,
A fairer goddess here must own.....

While many mourn the vanish'd light
Of summer, and the sweet sun's face

I mourn that these, however bright,
No anguish from the soul can chase
By love inflicted: all around,
Nor song of birds, nor ladies' bloom,
Nor flowers upspringing from the ground,
Can chase or cheer the spirits' gloom.....

Yet still thine aid, belov'd! impart,
Of all thy power, thy love, make trial;
Bid joy revive in this sad heart,
Joy that expires at thy denial:
Well may I pour my prayer to thee,
Beloved lady, since 'tis thine
Alone to send such care on me;
Alone for thee I ceaseless pine.

THE EMPEROR HENRY.

THE courtesy of the collectors who formed the Manesse MS. is testified by placing "Keiser Heinrich" at the head. He is here given more from a similar courtesy to his rank than his merit. The question has often been asked—Which Henry is this? and we can only reply, that general opinion and probability. are in favour of the son of Frederic Barba-

rossa, his successor in the Empire. If so, his poetry of course belongs to the 12th century.

Ich grüsse mit gesange die süssen
Die ich vermiden niht wil noch enmac, &c.

I GREET in song that sweetest one
Whom I can ne'er forget;
Though many a day is past and gone
Since face to face we met.
Who sings this votive song for me,
Or man or woman, he or she,
To her, my absent one, shall welcome be.

Kingdom and lands are nought to me
When with her presence weigh'd;
And when her face no more I see,
My pow'r and greatness fade.
Then of my wealth I reckon none,
But sorrow only, for mine own;
Rising and falling, thus my life moves on.....

He errs, whose heart will not believe
That I might yet be blest,
Though never crown again had leave
Upon my head to rest:
This loss I might supply; but when
Her love was gone, what had I then?
Nor joy, hope, solace could I know again.

HENRY OF MORUNGE.

"Her Heinrich von Morunge," a Suabian (and probably of the same family as that of "der edle Möringer," whose history is the subject of the noble ballad so called), is of the first half of the 13th century. Many of his pieces, all of considerable merit, are preserved in the Manesse MS. We have already given two extracts from them at p. 132.

Sie hat lieb ein kleines vogellin,
Das singet und ein lútzel nah ir sprechen kan, &c.

My lady dearly loves a pretty bird *,
That sings, and echoes back her gentle tone;
Were I, too, near her, never should be heard
A songster's note more pleasant than my own;

* O were my love yon lilac fair
Wi' purple blossoms to the spring,
And I a bird to shelter there
When wearied on my little wing,
How I wad mourn when it was torn
By autumn wild and winter rude;
But I wad sing, on wanton wing,
When youthfu' May its bloom renew'd.
Burns.

Sweeter than sweetest nightingale I'd sing.
For thee, my lady fair,
This yoke of love I bear,
Deign thou to comfort me, and ease my sorrowing.

Were but the troubles of my heart by her
Regarded, I would triumph in my pain;
But her proud heart stands firmly, and the stir
Of passionate grief o'ercomes not her disdain.
Yet, yet I do remember how before
My eyes she stood, and spoke,
And on her gentle look
My earnest gaze was fix'd; O were it so once more!

Sach ieman die frouwen
Die man mac schouwen
In dem venster stan,
Diu vil wol getane
Diu tuot mich ane
Sorgen die ich han, &c.

Hast thou seen
My heart's true queen
At the window gazing?
She whose love
Can care remove,
All my sorrows easing.

Like the sun at first uprising,
She was shrouded,
And o'erclouded
Was my spirit,—now rejoicing.

Is there none
Whose heart can own
A gen'rous, kindly feeling?
Let him aid me,
Find that lady
Who from me is stealing;
That her beauteous smile may cheer me
Ere I go;
For love and woe
To the silent grave fast bear me.

Then upon
My burial stone
Men shall write how dearly
She was priz'd
And I despised,
I that lov'd sincerely:
Then the passing swain shall see
My complaining,
Her disdaining;
Such sad fate she dealt to me.

O we sol aber mir iemer me
Gelúhten dur die naht,
Noch wisser danne ein sne,
Ir lib vil wol geslaht,
Der truog diu ougen min
Ich wande es solde sin des liehten manen schin.....

Alas for me, if never more
On me should gleam at eventide,
Far whiter than the pure snow shower,
The form of beauty's fairest pride,
Which beam'd so gently on my stedfast gaze
That to my eye it seem'd like the soft moonlight rays.....

BURKHART OF HOHENFELS.

"Her Burkart von Hohenvels" was a prolific writer of the first part of the 13th century. There are many of his songs in Bodmer.

Si gelichet sich der sunnen
Diu den sternen nimt ir schin
Die da vor so liehte brunnen;
Alsus nimt diu frouwe min
Allen wiben gar ir glast.

Like the sun's uprising light
Shines that maid, before whom fade
Other charms, however bright;
As the stars at break of day,
Late so brilliant fade away.

When my spirit light had flown
Wanton forth in pleasure's quest,
Then those beaming eyes have shone
O'er the rover's path, and led
Home to her from whom it sped.

When again its wing it took
Falcon-like for joy to soar,
Ne'er the gentle spell it broke;
Soon again it sought its home
In that breast it wander'd from.

O'er it fear was ever coming
Lest its mistress, at the thought
That for other loves 'twas roaming,
Vengeful all its joys might blight;
Therefore back it wing'd its flight.

GODFREY OF NIFEN.

THIS "Her Götfrit von Nifen," with his brother Henry, made an attack (says Docen, Museum I. 88.) on the bishop of Costnitz, in 1240, and were taken prisoners by him. Some of his songs are printed in Bodmer, but the following is taken from Professor Benecke's volume of additions and corrections.

Nu woluf! grüssen
Wir den süssen,
Der uns büssen
  Wil des winters pin;
Der uns wil bringen
Vogelin singen,
Blümen springen,
  Und der sunnen schin.
Da man sach e
Den kalten sne,
Da siht man gras,
Von touwe nas,
Bruevent das
  Blümen unde der kle.

Vorhin in walde,
Uf der halde,
Hort man balde
  Wunneklichen schal:
In süsser wise,
Gar von prise,
Hohe, lise,
  Singet dú nahtegal; &c.

Up, up, let us greet
The season so sweet,
For winter is gone:
And the flowers are springing,
And little birds singing,
Their soft notes ringing,
And bright is the sun!
Where all was drest
In a snowy vest,
There grass is growing
With dew-drops glowing,
And flowers are seen
On beds so green.

All down in the grove,
Around, above,
Sweet music floats;
As now loudly vying,
Now softly sighing,
The nightingale's plying
Her tuneful notes,
And joyous at spring
Her companions sing.
Up, maidens, repair
To the meadows so fair,
And dance we away
This merry May!

Yet, though May is blooming,
And summer is coming,
And birds may sing,
What boots me the joy
If my fair, too coy,
This heart will wring?
If that auburn hair,
Those eyes so fair,
Those lips so smiling,
Are only beguiling
And piercing my heart
With witching art?

DIETMAR OF AST.

"Her Dietmar von Ast" (in the Thurgau) appears to be entitled to claim a very high antiquity. He certainly belongs at any rate to the beginning of the 13th century. Several songs in the Manesse MS. bear his name. The two following little pieces place

him in the foremost rank of the Minnesingers in point of literary merit, and show that with them, as well as with the Troubadours, the compositions which we must assign to the earliest writers are often as perfect, both in style and versification, as those of the latest.

Es stuent ein frowe alleine
Und warte uber heide
Und warte ihres liebes,
So gesach si valken fliegen:
So wol dir, valke, das du bist
Du flúgest swar dir lieb ist;
Du erkusest dir in dem walde
Einen boum der dir gevalle.

Also han ouch ich getan,
Ich erkos mir selbe einen man
Den erwelten minú ougen
Das nident schone frouwen, &c.

By the heath stood a lady
All lonely and fair,
As she watch'd for her lover
A falcon flew near.
"Happy falcon!" she cried,
"Who can fly where he list,
And can choose in the forest
The tree he loves best!

Thus, too, had I chosen
One knight for mine own,
Him my eye had selected,
Him priz'd I alone.
But other fair ladies
Have envied my joy;
And why? for I sought not
Their bliss to destroy.

As to thee, lovely summer!
Returns the birds' strain,
As on yonder green linden
The leaves spring again,
So constant doth grief
At my eyes overflow,
And wilt not thou, dearest,
Return to me now?

Yes, come my own hero,
All others desert!
When first my eye saw thee,
How graceful thou wert;
How fair was thy presence,
How graceful, how bright;
Then think of me only,
My own chosen knight!"

Uf der linden obene
Da sanc ein kleines vogelin;
Vor dem walde wart es lut,
Do huop sich aber das herze min,
An eine stat da es é da was;
Ic sach da rosebluomen stan,
Die manent mich der gedanken vil
Die ich hin zeiner frouwen han.

THERE sat upon the linden-tree
A bird, and sang its strain;
So sweet it sang, that, as I heard,
My heart went back again.
It went to one remember'd spot,
It saw the rose-trees grow,
And thought again the thoughts of love
There cherish'd long ago.

A thousand years to me it seems
Since by my fair I sate,
Yet thus to have been a stranger long
Was not my *choice* but *fate:*
Since then I have not seen the flowers,
Nor heard the birds' sweet song;
My joys have all too briefly past,
My griefs been all too long.

LIBRARY
CPTE
BOMBAY
ASIATIC

Her Kristan von Hamle.

London, Published by Longman & C.° May 1823.

CHRISTIAN OF HAMLE.

"Her Kristân von Hamle" flourished about the middle of the 13th century. Nothing is known of his history.

Ich wolte das der anger sprechen solte,....
Und er mir danne rehte sagen wolte
Wie gar sanfte im hûre was,
Do min frouwe bluomen las
Ab im, und ir minnenclichen fuesse
Ruorten uf sin gruenes gras.

Would that the meadow could speak!
And then would it truly declare
How happy was yesterday,
When my lady love was there;
When she pluck'd its flowers, and gently prest
Her lovely feet on its verdant breast.

Meadow! what transport was thine
When my lady walk'd across thee;
And her white hands pluck'd the flowers,
Those beautiful flowers that emboss thee!
Oh suffer me, then, thou bright green sod,
To set my feet where my lady trod!

Meadow! pray thou for the ease
Of a heart that with love is panting!
And so will *I* pray, that her feet
On thy sod my lady planting,
No wintry snows may ever lie there,
And my heart be green as your vesture fair.

RODOLPH OF ROTHENBERG.

"Her Ruodolf von Rotenburg" probably sprang from the noble family of that name in the Aar-gau, under Frederic II. The following song was written while the poet was abroad, and apparently on a crusade.

Mir seit ein ellender bilgerin
Ungevraget von der frouwen min, &c.

A stranger pilgrim spoke to me,
Unquestioned, of my lady bright:
He told me of her beauty rare,
How kind she was, how courteous, fair;
A tale it was of soft delight,
That o'er my heart came pleasantly.

"Heaven grant my love a happy day!"
Each other greeting thus denied,
Still does my spirit fondly say
Ever at morning's earliest ray;
And, ne'er forgot at eventide,
My kind "goodnight" I constant pay.

Almost by reason was my frame
Deserted, when I left her last,
When fair she beam'd upon my eye,
Bright as the glowing evening sky;
Joy in her favour was o'ercast
By sorrowing thoughts that o'er me came.

She bade me, when I from her went,
My sorrowing song to her convey;
And I would pour it now to her
Could I but find a messenger,
Who, bearing to her hand the lay,
Might gracefully my song present.

And should one herald fail, away
Straight would I send a thousand more;
And should they all convey the song,
And dwell in concert soft and long
Upon the strain,—perhaps that hour
A thankful word my toil might pay.

THE DUKE OF ANHALT.

THIS duke is Henry "the Fat," an unfortunate name for a poet, who occupies, however, no mean rank among his cotemporaries. He died in 1267.

Sta bi! la mich den wint anweien
Der kumt von mines herzen kiuniginne;
Wie moeht ein luft so sueze draien
Ern wer al uht und uht vil gar ein minne.

STAY! let the breeze still blow on me
That pass'd o'er *her*, my heart's true queen!
Were she not sweet as sweet can be
So soft that breeze had never been.

O'ercome, my heart to her bows down;
Yet heaven protect thee, lady, still!
O were those roseate lips my own,
I might defy e'en age's chill.

Before that loveliest of the land
Well may the boaster's tongue run low:
I view those eyes, that lily hand,
And still tow'rd where she tarries bow.

O might I that fair form enfold,
As evening sweetly closed on us!
No—that were more than heart could hold;
Enough for me to praise her thus.

COUNT KRAFT OF TOGGENBURG.

Docen says (Museum, I. 212) that this count is well known in Swiss history on account of his transactions with the Abbey of St. Gall. We have no further particulars of his history, but he appears to have died in 1270.

Hat ieman ze freuden muot
Der sol keren ze der gruenen linden;
Ir wol bluenden sumerbluet
Mac man da bi loube schatten vinden
Das liebt cleiner vogelin schal und singet;
Da von sendes herzen muot
Uf als diu wolken hohe swinget.

Uf der heide ist bluomen vil;
Dem der meie sorge mac geringen
Der vindet maniger froede spil; &c.

Does any one seek the soul of mirth,
Let him hie to the greenwood tree;
And there, beneath the verdant shade,
The bloom of the summer see;
For there sing the birds right merrily,
And there will the bounding heart upspring,
To the lofty clouds, on joyful wing.

On the hedgerows spring a thousand flowers,
And he, from whose heart sweet May
Hath banish'd care, finds many a joy;
And *I*, too, would be gay,
Were the load of pining care away;
Were my lady kind, my soul were light,
Joy crowning joy would raise its flight.....

The flowers, leaves, hills, the vale, and mead,
And May with all its light,
Compar'd with the roses, are pale indeed,
Which my lady bears; and bright
My eyes will shine as they meet my sight,
Those beautiful lips of rosy hue,
As red as the rose just steep'd in dew.

STEINMAR.

This poet belongs to about the middle of the 13th century, and is supposed to have sprung from a family in the Zurich-gau or in the Tyrol. There are several of his songs in the Manesse MS.

Ich wil gruenen mit der sat
Dú so wunneklichen stat;
Ich wil mit dien bluomen bluen,
Und mit den vogellin singen;
Ich wil louben so der walt,
Sam dú heide sin gestalt;
Ich wil mih niht lassen muen
Mit allen bluomen springen;
Ich wil ze liebe miner lieben frouwen
Mit des vil suessen meien touwe touwen, &c.

...

With the graceful corn upspringing,
With the birds around me singing,
With the leaf-crown'd forests waving,
Sweet May-dews the herbage laving,
With the flowers that round me bloom,
To my lady dear I'll come:
All things beautiful and bright,
Sweet in sound and fair to sight,
Nothing, nothing is too rare
For my beauteous lady fair;

Every thing I'll do and be,
So my lady solace me.

She is one in whom I find
All things fair and bright combined;
When her beauteous form I see,
Kings themselves might envy me,
Joy with joy is gilded o'er,
Till the heart can hold no more.
She is bright as morning sun,
She my fairest, loveliest one;
For the honour of the fair
I will sing her beauty rare,
Every thing I'll do and be,
So my lady solace me.

Solace me, then, sweetest!—be
Such in heart as I to thee;
Ope thy beauteous lips of love,
Call me thine, and then above
Merrily, merrily I will sail
With the light clouds on the gale.
Dear one, deign my heart to bless,
Steer me on to happiness,
Thou, in whom my soul confideth,
Thou, whose love my spirit guideth;
Every thing I'll do and be,
So my lady solace me.

OTHO,
MARGRAVE OF BRANDENBURG.

Otho was surnamed "mit dem Pfeile," (with the arrow). He flourished in the last half of the 13th century, and died in 1298. Another of his songs is excellently translated in the "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," p. 8.

Uns kumt aber ein liehter meie
Der machet manig herze fruot, &c.

Again appears the cheerful May,
On many a heart its joy it pours,
A thousand flowers their sweets display,
And what more blooming than the bowers?
Sweet is the various music there,
New clad in leaves the wild woods are,
And many a pensive heart this hour to joy restores.

And all the live-long day I'll strive
For favour in my lady's eyes;
And must I die in gloom, nor live
To win and wear that peerless prize,
Yet am I still consol'd to know
That *she* the death-wound doth bestow,
That from *her* rosy lips the fatal sentence flies.

THE CHANCELLOR.

WHO "Der Chanzler" was even by name, is not known. He comes into the age of the "meisters," who were fond of assumed titles. Some say he was Heinrich von Klingenberg, a person in the service of Rodolph of Hapsburg. An ancient ballad of "The twelve old masters," printed by Görres, says—

Der Kanzler was ein *fisher* lang
Zu Steiermark in dem lande:

and if he *were* originally a fisherman, his occupation would not be lower than that of many who succeeded to what became the trade of making verses. Most of his pieces are of moral or spiritual tendency; but he is sometimes not an unsuccessful follower of the older and better school of the Minnesingers.

Sumer wunne swer dich schouwen
Welle der kere in die ouwen!
Uf die berge und in diu tal, &c.

WHO would summer pleasures try
Let him to the meadows hie.
O'er the mountain, in the vale,
Gladsome sounds and sights prevail:
In the fields fresh flowers are springing,
In the boughs new carols singing,

Richly in sweet harmony
There the birds new music ply.
This is all thine own, sweet May!
As thy softer breezes play,
Snow and frost-work melt away.

Old and young come forth! for ye
Winter bound, again are free.
Up! ye shall not grieve again.
Look upon that verdant plain,
Its gloomy robe no more it wears;
How beauteously its face appears!
He who mid the flowers enjoys
The sweetness of his lady's eyes,
Let him cast his cares away,
And give the meed of thanks to May.

From the heart's most deep recess,
Hovering smiles, intent to bless,
Gather on my lady's lips;
Smiles, that other smiles eclipse;
Smiles, more potent, care dispelling,
Than the bank with flowers sweet smelling,
Than the birds' melodious measures,
Than our choicest woodland treasures,
Than the flower-besprinkled plains,
Than the nightingale's sweet strains;
Fairer, sweeter, beauty reigns.

HENRY, DUKE OF BRESLAU.

"Herzog Heinrich von Pressela," (the fourth of that name), reigned from 1266 to 1299, and is the subject of panegyric by cotemporary poets. The Manesse MS. contains two of his songs; one of them, (a translation of which follows,) has been greatly admired, and is undoubtedly a singular production for the age.

Ich clage dir, meie! ich clage dir, sumer wunne!
Ich clage dir, brehtú heide breit!
Ich clage dir, ougebrehender kle!
Ich clage dir, gruener walt! ich clage dir, sunne!
Ich clage dir, Venus, sendú leit,
Das mir die liebe tuot so we!

Poet.

To thee, O *May*, I must complain,
O *summer*, I complain to thee,
And thee, thou flower-bespangled *plain*,
And *meadow*, dazzling bright to see!
To thee, O *greenwood*, thee, O *sun*,
And thee, too, *Love!* my song shall be
Of all the pain my lady's scorn
Relentlessly inflicts on me.

Yet, would ye all with one consent
Lend me your aid, she might repent:
Then for kind heaven's sake hear, and give me back
content!

MAY, &c.

"What is the wrong? stand forth and tell us what;
Unless just cause be shown, we hear thee not."

POET.

She lets my fancy feed on bliss;
But when, believing in her love,
I seek her passion's strength to prove,
She lets me perish, merciless:
Ah! woe is me, that e'er I knew
Her from whose love such misery doth ensue!

MAY.

"I, *May*, will strait my flowers command;
My rosës bright, and lilies white,
No more for her their charms expand."

SUMMER.

"And I, bright *Summer*, will restrain
The birds' sweet throats; their tuneful notes
No more shall charm her ear again."

PLAIN.

"When on the *plain* she doth appear,
My flow'rets gay shall fade away;
Thus crost, perchance to thee she'll turn again
her ear."

MEAD.

"And I, the *Mead*, will help thee too;
Gazing on me, her fate shall be,
That my bright charms shall blind her view."

WOOD.

"And I, the *Greenwood*, break my bowers
When the fair maid flies to my shade,
Till she to thee her smile restores."

SUN.

"I *Sun*, will pierce her frozen heart,
Till from the blaze of my bright rays,
Vainly she flies:—then learns a gentler part."

LOVE.

"I, *Love*, will banish instantly
Whatever dear and sweet I bear,
Till she in pity turn to thee."

POET.

Alas! must *all* her joys thus flee?
Nay, rather I would joyless die,
How great soe'er my pain may be.

LOVE.

"Seek'st thou revenge?" saith *Love*, "then at my nod
The paths of joy shall close, so lately trod."

POET.

Nay then! Oh leave her not thus shorn of bliss;
Leave me to die forlorn, so hers be happiness.

ALBRECHT MARSCHAL v. RAPRECHTSWILE.

London, Published by Longman & Co May, 1828.

ALBERT,
MARSHALL OF RAPRECHTSWEIL.

Of this minstrel we know nothing; but we may suppose, from the scene chosen for the illustration of his songs in the Manesse MS., that he was of some renown in arms.

Aber hûget mir der muot
Zwar es meyet meyen bluot; &c.

Once more mounts my spirit gay,
Once more comes the bloom of May;
See, upon the branches spring
Green buds, almost opening,
And the nightingale so fair,
Sings herself to slumber there.
Honor'd be the songstress dear,
She who trains the branches here;
Ever must she happy be
Who inspires the birds and me
With this gladsome gaiety.

She has angel loveliness;
Would she deign my heart to bless,
She that sends me health and joy,
Blest above all bliss were I,

Heaven would then be mine on earth,
For in her lies all my mirth.
With each lovely colour she
Decks her fair face daintily;
Red, and white, and auburn, there
Blend their beauties rich and rare;
And embosom'd in her mind
All things fair and pure we find.

ULRICH OF LICHTENSTEIN.

"Her Uolrich von Liechtenstein" has left a romance behind him, entitled, "Frauendienst" (Lady service), which is very curious and interesting as a picture of the manners and tone of feeling of his age (the middle of the 13th century). It is the chivalric life of the author. It separates, as it were, the existence and character of the knight into two divisions. In his chivalric character he is from boyhood the very Quixote of knighthood, a most despairing and unrequited lover, who follows his unpitying mistress in Platonic affection through every fortune. In the matter of fact part of his life, it comes out, but only incidentally, that he became, in the midst of all his

sorrows, and without any notice to the reader, a married man. Not only a wife, but a family of children, are noticed, quite by-the-bye, at a moment when the reader expects, from a little relenting on the part of his mistress, that a treaty of matrimonial alliance is about to be opened. A great variety of songs are introduced in the romance, suited to the events and state of mind of the moment.

The conclusion dwells with melancholy on the increase of that lawless free-booting spirit which we learn from history had gained ground in Germany, and laments the neglect of those conventional principles of chivalric virtue with which the age had opened. To inculcate the advantage of those principles, and particularly to insist on the duty of making the love and favour of the ladies the ruling guides of a true knight, seem to be the moral objects of Ulrich's romance. "When I was yet a little boy," says he, "I often heard wise men say, that no one could attain true worth who did not attach himself faithfully to the service of one lady; that no one was so light of heart, so free in spirit, as he who loved one lady dearer even than himself." And he accordingly very early vowed so to dedicate himself "with body, goods, heart, and life." In these principles he was brought up by the Margrave Henry of Austria, who "taught him many of his own virtues,—taught him to talk of the ladies, to ride on horseback, and to make

soft verses." "Never," said he, "wilt thou have the favour of virtuous ladies if thou dealest in deceitful flattery and lies." "Had I observed all his advice," adds Ulrich, "I had been a better man than I am."

The romance then runs through a series of wild adventures, illustrated with "dance-songs," "watch-songs," &c. He is at one time in adversity, but still he bears up. "I lost great wealth; what of that? I still kept up my spirit. My lady smiled on me, and I forgot all the rest:"—and anon he sings another "Tanz-weise."

Thirty and three years, he concludes, had he served as a true knight, when he wrote that book. He apologizes for saying so much of himself; "but it needs must be so; my lady commanded it, and what she orders that must I do. The book belongs to all good ladies."

The following is one of the songs appropriately introduced in the course of the story. It is a dialogue between the knight and his lady. The Love of these German minstrels, it will be recollected, is a feminine deity, "frau minne."

Frouwe schöne, frouwe reine,
Frouwe selig, frouwe guot, &c.

"Lady beauteous, lady pure,
Lady happy, lady kind,
Love, methinks, has little power,
So proud thy bearing, o'er thy mind.

Didst thou feel the power of love,
Then would those fair lips unclose,
And be taught in sighs to move."

"What is love, then, good sir knight?
Is it man or woman? say;
Tell me, if I know it not,
How it comes to pass, I pray.
Thou should'st tell me all its story,
Whence, and where, it cometh here,
That my heart may yet be wary."

"Lady, love so mighty is,
All things living to her bow;
Various is her power, but I
Will tell thee what of her I know.
Love is good, and love is ill,
Joy and woe she can bestow,
Spreading life and spirit still."

"Can love banish, courteous knight,
Pining grief and wasting woe?
Pour gay spirits on the heart,
Polish, grace, and ease bestow?
If in her *these* powers may meet,
Great is she, and thus shall be
Her praise and honour great."

" Lady, I will say yet more;
Lovely are her gifts, her hand
Joy bestows, and honour too;
The virtues come at her command,
Joys of sight and joys of heart
She bestows, as she may choose,
And splendid fortune doth impart."

" How shall I obtain, sir knight,
All these gifts of lady love?
Must I bear a load of care?
Much too weak my frame would prove.
Grief and care I cannot bear;
Can I then the boon obtain;
Tell me, sir knight, then, how and where."

" Lady, thou should'st think of me
As I of thee think,—heartily.
Thus shall we together blend
Firm in love's sweet harmony,
Thou still mine, I still thine."

" It cannot be, sir knight, with *me*;
Be your own, I'll still be mine."

GOESLI OF EHENHEIM.

Of "Her Gœsli von Ehenheim" only a few verses remain. He belongs to the first half of the 13th century. One of his songs thus opens;

Nu ist der blúenden heide voget
Mit gewalt uf uns gezoget,
Hoeret wie mit winde broget! &c.

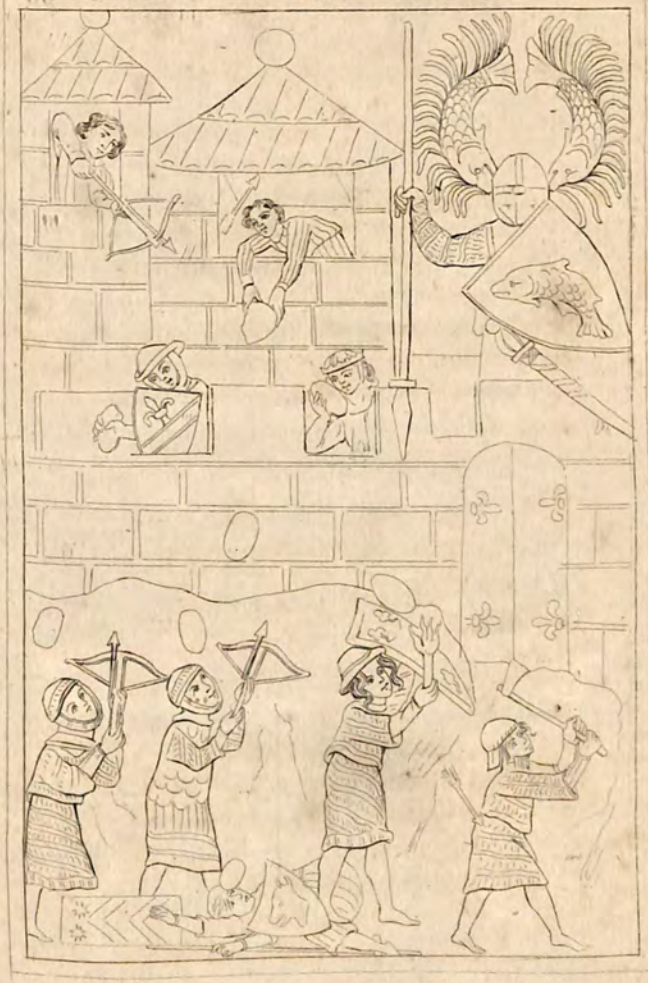
Now will the foe of ev'ry flower,
Send forth the tempest of his rage;
List! how his winds the battle wage,
And blow the fields and woodlands o'er!
Him nought withstands: his giant power
Tears from the plat the rose away,
And withers up each flow'ret gay;
So sharp his rage is to devour.
For this, the meads are sorrowing,
The birds are dumb, no longer song
Bursts the mute groves and hills among,
Chill'd by cold snows,—Yet still my love I sing.....

THE THURINGIAN.

It has been supposed that this poet, to whom the epithet "der Diuring" is given, was the Landgrave of Thuringia himself, the celebrated patron of the Minnesingers at the commencement of the 13th century. Others have suspected him to be the same as Christian von Lupin.

Dú lieben zit von hinnan muos;
Der voglin gruos
Entwichen ist von sender not; &c.

The pleasant season must away,
The song of birds no more
Must echo from the verdant spray,
Chill frost asserts its power;
Where now is gone thy bloom,
Thy flowers so fair?
The verdant pride of mead and grove,
The leaf-crown'd forest, where?
In the whitening frost their bloom is lost,
And gone are their joys as the things that were.



DER DURING.

London. Published by Longman, & Co. May. 1805.

Nor frost nor snow o'er me have power
E'er since my heart hath known
Those laughter-loving lips, whose charms,
Just like a rose new blown,
More sweet, each passing hour,
The last outvie;
So lovely shines that lady fair
Of deathless memory,
Whose form, so bright, is my heart's delight,
Like the eastern day to the watching eye.

WINCESLAUS, KING OF BOHEMIA.

This king is most probably the first of that name, and belongs, therefore, to the middle of the 13th century. Two songs, and a watchsong, by this monarch, are preserved in the Manesse MS. The following has perhaps only its aristocratic claims to a place. The measure of the original is very unmanageable, and has been altogether abandoned here.

Sit das der winter hat die bluomen ingetan,
Der kleinen vogelin suessen sank, &c.

Now that stern winter each blossom is blighting,
And birds in the woodlands no longer we hear,
I will repair to a scene more inviting,
Nor will he repent who shall follow me there.
Instead of the flowers the plain so adorning,
Beautiful fair ones shall bloom like the morning;
O what a vivid and glorious dawning;
Sweet smiles, sprightly converse, the drooping heart cheer.

Dares any one now, as in joy he reposes,
His happy hours crown'd by the smiles of the fair,
Still love and lament for the summer's past roses?
Ill then deserves he a blessing so rare;
Mine be the joys which his heart cannot measure;
Might I behold but my heart's dearest treasure,
Forgotten were all in that exquisite pleasure,
E'en the tale I once told thee,—forgive it, my fair!

Beautiful one, to my heart ever nearest,
The solace of joy that remaineth to me
Rests in thy favour, thou brightest and dearest,
Me shall thy beauty from misery free;
Long may it cheer me, to happiness guide me,
And O might it be, when thou smilest beside me,
In that blessed moment such joy might betide me,
To touch those bright lips as they smile upon me.

HER LUTOLT VON SEVEN.

London, Published by Longman & Co May 1828.

LÜTOLT VON SEVEN.

"Her Luitolt," von Seven, a family known in the Tyrol, and in the Zurich-gau also, belongs to the middle of the 13th century.

In dem walde und uf der gruenen heide
Meiet es so rehte wol,
Das ich mit suezer ougenweide
Wol von schulden troesten sol;
So han ich fúr senenden muot
Trost deheinen,
Wan den einen
Das min vrouwe ist guot.

In the woods and meadows green,
May shines forth so pleasantly,
That the lovely prospect there
Joy enough might bring to me:
But I covet for my mind
Solace none,
Save *this* alone,
That my lady should be kind.

Happy, whom the song of birds
Gladdens, and the bloom of May;
He may take his fill of each,
Freely revel, and be gay:
He may take his choice of joy;
Flow'rs fresh springing,
Birds sweet singing,
All in loveliest harmony!

Me my lady's favour glads
More than flow'rets red or fair;
Song I want not, for her grace
Frees me from each pining care.
Well then may her noble smile
Pleasure give,
Pain relieve,
And my heart of grief beguile.

WATCHSONGS.

The Minnesingers were fond of a species of ballad called "wachterlieder" or watchsongs, many of which possess great sprightliness and beauty of description, and show clearly that these minstrels might

have been eminently successful in narrative ballads, if they had cultivated that class of composition. The watchsongs generally begin with a parley between the sentinel or watch of the castle, and the love-stricken knight who seeks a stolen interview with his lady. The parties linger in taking leave; the sentinel is commonly again introduced to warn them of the signs of approaching morn, and a tender parting ensues. Two specimens are subjoined, both of which are anonymous. The excellent translation of the second is, with two or three trifling alterations, borrowed from the "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities;" it would be difficult for any one to execute a better. There are pieces of a somewhat similar character among the Troubadours, and called by them albas or aubades; the following is one of the best, and is perhaps as well to be given in the original only. M. Raynouard does not name its author.

En un vergier, sotz fuelha d' albespi,
Tenc la dompna son amic costa si,
Tro la gayta crida que l' alba vi.
Oy dieus! oy dieus! de [que?] l' alba tan tost ve

Plagues a dieu ja la nueitz non falhis
Ni 'l mieus amicx lonc de mi no s partis,
Ni la gayta jorn ni l' alba no vis.
Oy dieus! oy dieus! de l' alba tan tost ve!

Bels dous amicx, baizem nos ieu e vos
Aval els pratz on chanto 'ls auzellos
Tot o fassam en despieg del gilos.
Oy dieus! oy dieus! de l' alba tan tost ve!

Bels dous amicx, fassam un joc novel,
Ins el jardi on chanton li auzel,
Tro la gayta toque son caramel.
Oy dieus! oy dieus! de l' alba tan tost ve!

Per la doss' aura qu' es venguda de lay
Del mieu amic belh e cortes e gay,
Del sieu alen ai begut un dous ray.
Oy dieus! oy dieus! de l' alba tan tost ve!

La dompna es agradans e plazens;
Per sa beutat la gardon mantas gens,
Et a son cor en amar leyalmens.
Oy dieus! oy dieus! de l' alba tan tost ve!

The original of the following watchsong is given in the collection published by Görres; but he, as usual, has neither mentioned the author's name, nor given any reference to the source from whence he took it.

Die sonn die ist verblichen,
Der mond ist uf gegangen,
Die nacht die komt geschlichen,
Frau nahtegal mit schalle
Thut süssiglichen singen.
Sprach sich ein wächter zart, &c.

THE sun is gone down,
And the moon upwards springeth,
The night creepeth onward,
The nightingale singeth.
To himself said a watchman,
" Is any knight waiting
In pain for his lady,
To give her his greeting?
Now then for their meeting."

His words heard a knight
In the garden while roaming.
" Ah! watchman," he said,
" Is the daylight fast coming,
And may I not see her,
And wilt thou not aid me?"
" Go wait in thy covert
Lest the cock crow reveillie,
And the dawn should betray thee."

Then in went that watchman
And call'd for the fair,
And gently he rous'd her—
" Rise, lady! prepare!
New tidings I bring thee,
And strange to thine ear;
Come rouse thee up quickly,
Thy knight tarries near;
Rise, lady! appear!"

" Ah, watchman! though purely
The moon shines above,
Yet trust not securely
That feign'd tale of love:
Far, far from my presence
My own knight is straying;
And sadly repining
I mourn his long staying,
And weep his delaying."

" Nay, lady! yet trust me,
No falsehood is there."
Then up sprang that lady
And braided her hair,
And donn'd her white garment,
Her purest of white;
And, her heart with joy trembling,
She rush'd to the sight
Of her own faithful knight.

The following is another and the best specimen perhaps that is known of watchsongs; the original has been printed in vol. i. p. 223, of " Wunderhorn," an interesting, but very inaccurate, collection of ancient German popular poetry.

Vor tags ich hört, in liebes port, wohl diese wort,
Von wächters mund erklingen ;—
Ist jeman je, verborgen hie, der achte wie
Er mög hindannen sprengen ; &c.

I HEARD before the dawn of day
The watchman loud proclaim ;—
" If any knightly lover stay
In secret with his dame,
Take heed, the sun will soon appear ;
Then fly, ye knights, your ladies dear,
Fly ere the daylight dawn.

" Brightly gleams the firmament,
In silvery splendor gay,
Rejoicing that the night is spent,
The lark salutes the day :
Then fly, ye lovers, and be gone !
Take leave before the night is done,
And jealous eyes appear."

That watchman's call did wound my heart,
And banish'd my delight :
" Alas, the envious sun will part
Our loves, my lady bright."
On me she look'd with downcast eye,
Despairing at my mournful cry,
" We tarry here too long."

Straight to the wicket did she speed;
" Good watchman spare thy joke!
Warn not my love, till o'er the mead
The morning sun has broke:
Too short, alas! the time, since here
I tarried with my leman dear,
In love and converse sweet."

" Lady, be warn'd! on roof and mead
The dew-drops glitter gay;
Then quickly bid thy leman speed,
Nor linger till the day;
For by the twilight did I mark
Wolves hyeing to their covert dark,
And stags to covert fly."

Now by the rising sun I view'd
In tears my lady's face:
She gave me many a token good,
And many a soft embrace.
Our parting bitterly we mourn'd;
The hearts which erst with rapture burn'd,
Were cold with woe and care.

A ring, with glittering ruby red,
Gave me that lady sheen,
And with me from the castle sped
Along the meadow green:

And whilst I saw my leman bright,
She waved on high her 'kerchief white:
"Courage! To arms!" she cried.

In the raging fight each pennon white
Reminds me of her love;
In the field of blood, with mournful mood,
I see her 'kerchief move;
Through foes I hew, whene'er I view
Her ruby ring, and blithely sing,
"Lady, I fight for thee."

JOHN HADLOUB.

"Meister Johans Hadloub," a native of Zurich, flourished at the end of the 13th century. He almost closes the line of true Minnesingers, and yet rises far above the artificial school of Meister-singers by whom they were succeeded. He was the friend of Rudiger von Manesse, an illustrious name not merely in the story of German poetry, but in the history of literature, as the judicious patron and protector of the declining taste of the age, and as the preserver of

the ornaments of a century and a half of literary excellence, then hastening into neglect. Hadloub's songs occupy no mean rank in the collection; they give promise of continued energy and excellence: but with him, and two or three cotemporaries, ends for a long time the poetic fame of Germany. The second of our specimens we owe to the kindness of a friend.

Swie verre ich von der schonen var
Ich habe ein botten der vert alse drate,
Der vert zuo zir in einer stunt;
Den sendi ich alle morgen dar, &c.

Far as I journey from my lady fair,
I have a messenger, who quickly goes
Morning and noon, and at the evening's close,
Where'er she wanders he pursues her there.
A restless, faithful, secret messenger
Well may he be, who, from my heart of hearts,
Charg'd with love's deepest secrets, thus departs,
And wings his way to her!
'Tis every thought I form that doth pursue
Thee, lady fair!
Ah! would that there
My wearied self had leave to follow too!

Ach! ich sach si trjuten wol ein kindelin,
Davon wart min muot liebes irmant; &c.

I saw yon infant in her arms carest,
And as I gazed on her my pulse beat high:
Gently she clasp'd it to her snowy breast,
While I, in rapture lost, stood musing by:
Then her white hands around his neck she flung,
And press'd it to her lips, and tenderly
Kiss'd his fair cheek as o'er the babe she hung.

And he, that happy infant! threw his arms
Around her neck, imprinting many a kiss;
Joying, as I would joy, to see such charms,
As though he knew how blest a lot were his.
How could I gaze on him and not repine?
Alas! I cried, would that I shared the bliss
Of that embrace, and that such joy were mine!

Straight she was gone; and then that lovely child
Ran joyfully to meet my warm embrace:
Then fancy with fond thoughts my soul beguiled;—
It was herself! O dream of love and grace!
I clasp'd it, where her gentle hands had prest,
I kiss'd each spot which bore her lips' sweet trace,
And joy the while went bounding through my breast.

WALTER VOGELWEIDE.

"Her Walther von der Vogelweide" (literally, "of the birdmeadow," which may be either an assumed name, or derived, as some think, from a family who had a castle so called in the Thurgau) ought chronologically to have taken his place long ago, his course being from about 1190 to 1240: but it was thought better to postpone the notice of his works, for the purpose of entering a little more fully into the particulars of the life and writings of this celebrated man.

No poet of the middle ages has left us more of his country's cotemporaneous history impressed upon his works; and a short notice of them (in which a volume by Ludwig Uhland, published at Stuttgart in 1822, will be our principal guide,) may perhaps be interesting, as well on that account as because it will present an outline of the life and character of one of the chivalric curiosities with which this singular age abounded. The period of his life, at any rate, embraces a considerable field of interest; as it includes the intestine divisions of the Empire after the death of Henry VI., the wars between Philip and Otho, the eventful reign

HER WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE.

London, Published by Longman & Co. May 1825.

of Frederic II., the struggles with the papal power, and the crusades.

We find the poet first in Austria:—

Ze Oesterrich lernde ich singen und sagen:

In Austria did I learn to sing and say.

His career seems to have begun there under Frederic (the son of Leopold VI.), who went to the crusade in 1197, and died in Palestine in the following year. His death is mentioned as the subject of great grief to the poet, who must have been then very young.

In 1198 began the dissensions as to the succession to the Imperial crown; and Walter attached himself to Philip of Suabia, in opposition to the papal faction, which supported Otho. To this period applies one of the longest of his songs, a sort of Jeremiad on the troubles of his country, which he opens by circumstantially describing himself in the position in which he is drawn in the Manesse MS., seated upon a rock, resting one knee on the other, with the elbow resting on the uppermost, and the hand covering the chin and one cheek. He proceeds, in a strain of great boldness and considerable poetic merit, to descant on the causes of the existing troubles, and particularly on the part borne in them by Rome.

The next historical piece is a song of triumph on the coronation of Philip, in 1198, at Mentz, where

he appears to have been present. He takes the opportunity of giving very judicious advice to the new Emperor for consolidating his government by a liberal policy; and fortifies his counsel by the examples of the generous Saladin, and his rival Richard Cœur de Lion. In many of the subsequent songs we find allusions to the evils which intestine war and the intrigues of the papal court had brought upon Germany; and our poet is every where the staunch advocate and defender of the national interest and honour.

We soon after find him commemorating the marriage which was celebrated at Magdeburg in 1207 between Philip and a Grecian princess :—

. . . . eins Keisers bruder und eins Keisers kint.

A Cæsar's brother and a Cæsar's child.

The bride he describes as—

Rose ane dorn, ein tube sunder gallen.

A thornless rose, a gall-less dove.

Walter's life was completely that of a wanderer. The geige and the harp were both his accompaniers. He pursued his way on horseback; and when we contemplate the great extent of this itinerancy, we need not be surprised that the poetry and romance of these countries were so widely diffused, even under so many apparent restraints on

free communication.—"From the Elbe to the Rhine, and thence to Hungary, had he," as he says, "surveyed. From the Seine to the Mur, from the Po to the Drave, had he learned the customs of mankind:" yet he ends with a patriotic eulogium on the excellence of his native land, on the good-breeding of the men, and the angel-forms of the women:—

Tiutsche man sint wol gezogen,
Als engel sint diu wib getan, &c.

The court of Herman Landgrave of Thuringia is his next resting-place; and we are not surprised to see our poet at a spot which has been already noticed as the great fostering-place of the Minnesinging art. Here, in 1207, was the famous battle or poetic contention of Wartburg, at which Walter is placed as a principal character; and we find him rejoicing in one of his songs at his good fortune in having entered the service of the Landgrave, "the flower that shines through the snow." There are several of our author's pieces which belong to this period of his life, and are more or less interesting, as referring to his companions at the court, to its customs, and even jokes. Many of them are devoted to the inculcation of moral and knightly virtue, often of a highly liberal and philosophic, and not unfrequently of a religious and devotional, turn.

We next find him engaging in the controversy between Otho and Frederic, the rivals for the Imperial

crown. He draws a poetic comparison between the merits and pretensions of the two candidates, siding himself with Frederic. Soon after, he appears at the court of Vienna, under the patronage of Leopold VII.; and we find him addressing that prince among others, in a very plaintive appeal.

Mir ist verspert der selden tor,
Da sten ich als ein weise vor, &c.

To me is barr'd the door of joy and ease,
There stand I as an orphan, lone, forlorn,
And nothing boots me that I frequent knock.
Strange that on every hand the show'r should fall,
And not one cheering drop should reach to me!
On all around the gen'rous Austrian's gifts,
Gladd'ning the land, like genial rain descend:
A fair and gay adorned mead is he,
Whereon are gather'd oft the sweetest flowers:
Would that his rich and ever-gen'rous hand
Might stoop to pluck one little leaf for me,
So might I fitly praise a scene so fair!

If no better fortune ensued, we need not wonder at finding Walter soon after seeking protection in Carinthia at the court of the duke Bernard, with whom (though a known patron of song, and generously disposed towards our author,) a misunderstanding arose, which is detailed in one song, and alluded to in others.

Other singers were there: he complains that he was misunderstood, or perhaps parodied (verkehrt), by them; and he very soon returned to Vienna. Leopold was engaging in a crusade destined against the Moors in Spain; but afterwards, in 1217, set out for the Holy Land, and appeared at the siege of Damietta. He returned home before the siege was finished; and this return is the subject of congratulation in one of the poet's songs, which, to say the truth however, is somewhat susceptible, and perhaps designedly so, of that double construction of which he complained in Carinthia.

> Ir sit wol wert das wir die glogen gegen iu luten,
> Dringen und schowen, als ein wunder komen si, &c.

Worthy art thou, returning home, the bell
For thee should ring, and crowds come gathering round
To gaze, how as a gladdening miracle
Thou com'st, of sin or shame all blameless found.
Man's praise and woman's love shall thus abound;
And this thy glorious welcome shall dispel
The slanderous words which some have breathed around,
That honour bade thee still at distance dwell.

The devastation, intestine disturbances, and calamities that followed the death of Leopold are historical facts; and they fix the period of a song of lamen-

tation by our poet, in which he boldly personifies the court of Vienna, and makes it address to himself a bitter lamentation over the wreck of its greatness. The times were indeed rapidly growing worse for men of Walter's mood and habits; and well might he exclaim, in reflecting on the brighter days of courtly patronage,—

Hie vor do was diu welt so schöne,
Nu ist si worden also höne, &c.

The world was once so beautiful,
And now so desolate and dull.

This seems to be the period, too, to which we must assign another and one of the most interesting of his pieces, addressed to Frederic II., in which he sighs for a home and fireside of his own, as a resting-place from his wanderings.

Gerne wolde ich, möhte es sin, bi eigenem fúr erwarmen, &c.

Fain (could it be) would I a home obtain,
And warm me by a hearth-side of my own.
Then, then, I 'd sing about the sweet birds' strain,
And fields and flowers, as I have whilome done;
And paint in song the lily and the rose
That dwell upon *her* cheek who smiles on me.
But lone I stray—no home its comfort shows:
Ah, luckless man! still doom'd *a guest* to be!

The next song announces the fulfilment of his

wishes; and he thus breaks forth in a burst of gratitude to "the noble king, the generous king," for his bounty:—

Up, then, dance we to the song,
Care, for ever be thou gone!
Firm at length shall be my step,
High again my spirit leap!

Walter had promised, as we have seen, to turn his thoughts to fields and flowers and the ladies' charms, when once he should be placed in ease and repose; and here, therefore, may be properly noticed his lighter pieces, of which there are a great many, though, perhaps, gaiety is not so much a distinguishing characteristic with him as with some others of the Minnesingers. He indeed has said of himself—

'Ich bin einer der nie halben tac
Mit ganzen frœiden hat vertriben, &c.

A mournful one am I, above whose head
A day of perfect bliss hath never past;
Whatever joys my soul have ravished,
Soon was the radiance of those joys o'ercast.

And none can show me that substantial pleasure
Which will not pass away like bloom from flowers;
Therefore, no more my heart such joys shall treasure,
Nor pine for fading sweets and fleeting hours.

Of love he has always the highest conception, as

of a principle of action, a virtue, a religious affection: and in his estimation of female excellence he is below none of his cotemporaries. The following is one of his songs of gallantry:—

So die bluomen us dem grase dringent,
Sam si lachen gegen den spilnden sunnen
In einem meien an dem morgen fruo,
Und die kleinen vogellin wol singent
In ir besten wise die si kunnen,
Wunne kan sich da gelichen zuo?

When from the sod the flow'rets spring,
And smile to meet the sun's bright ray,
When birds their sweetest carols sing
In all the morning pride of May,
What lovelier than the prospect there?
Can earth boast any thing more fair?
To me it seems an almost heaven,
So beauteous to my eyes that vision bright is given.

But when a lady, chaste and fair,
Noble, and clad in rich attire,
Walks through the throng with gracious air,
As sun that bids the stars retire,—
Then, where are all thy boastings, May?
What hast thou beautiful and gay
Compared with that supreme delight?
We leave thy loveliest flowers, and watch that lady bright.

Wouldst thou believe me,—come and place
Before thee all this pride of May;
Then look but on my lady's face,
And, which is best and brightest? say:
For me, how soon (if choice were mine)
This would I take, and that resign!
And say, "Though sweet thy beauties, May!
I'd rather forfeit all than lose my lady gay."

The following "Tanzweise" may serve as a specimen of our poet in a sprightlier vein than he is usually accustomed to:—

"Nemet, frouwe, disen kranz!" &c.

"Lady," I said, "this garland wear!
For thou wilt wear it gracefully;
And on thy brow 'twill sit so fair,
And thou wilt dance so light and free;
Had I a thousand gems, on thee,
Fair one! their brilliant light should shine:
Would'st thou such gift accept from me,—
O doubt me not,—it should be thine.

"Lady, so beautiful thou art,
That I on thee the wreath bestow,
'Tis the best gift I can impart;
But whiter, rosier flow'rs, I know,

Upon the distant plain they're springing,
Where beauteously their heads they rear,
And birds their sweetest songs are singing:
Come! let us go and pluck them there!"

She took the beauteous wreath I chose,
And like a child at praises glowing,
Her cheeks blush'd crimson as the rose
When by the snow-white lily growing:
But all from those bright eyes eclipse
Receiv'd; and then, my toil to pay,
Kind, precious words fell from her lips:
What more than this I shall not say.

The following piece opens in Walter's best style. The conclusion is rather of a whimsical character, and is followed in the original by another stanza, containing a moral, or interpretation, which the translator has found above his capacity to comprehend.

Do der sumer komen was,
Und die bluomen dur das gras
Wunneklich entsprungen,
Und die vogel sungen, &c.

'Twas summer,—through the opening grass
The joyous flowers upsprang,
The birds in all their diff'rent tribes
Loud in the woodlands sang:

Then forth I went, and wander'd far
The wide green meadow o'er;
Where cool and clear the fountain play'd,
There stray'd I in that hour.

Roaming on, the nightingale
Sang sweetly in my ear;
And by the greenwood's shady side,
A dream came to me there;
Fast by the fountain, where bright flowers
Of sparkling hue we see,
Close shelter'd from the summer heat,
That vision came to me.

All care was banish'd, and repose
Came o'er my wearied breast;
And kingdoms seem'd to wait on me,
For I was with the blest.

Yet, while it seem'd as if away
My spirit soar'd on high,
And in the boundless joys of heaven
Was wrapt in ecstasy,
E'en then, my body revel'd still
In earth's festivity;
And surely never was a dream
So sweet as this to me.

Thus I dream'd on, and might have dwelt
Still on that rapturous dream,
When, hark! a raven's luckless note
(Sooth, 'twas a direful scream,)
Broke up the vision of delight,
Instant my joy was past:
O, had a stone but met my hand,
That hour had been his last.....

His versification is in general correct and melodious, though often very artificial, as in the song which commences thus:—

Under der linden,
An der heide,
Da unser zweier bette was,
Da mugent ir vinden,
Schone beide,
Gebrochen bluomen unde gras;
Vor dem walde, in einem tal,
Tandaradai!
Schone sanc dú nachtegal.

Under all circumstances our poet speaks of himself in full confidence of his powers, and sometimes, when in distress, in very touching accents;

Chill penury and winter's power
Upon my soul so hard have prest,
That I would fain have seen no more
The red flow'rs that the meadows drest:

Yet, truth! 'twere hard, if I were gone,
Upon the merry-making throng,
That loud with joy was wont to ring,
And o'er the green to dance and spring!

The next series of historical allusions marks Walter as engaging in the dissensions between Frederic II, and the Pope, previous to and during the crusade undertaken by that monarch. In all his pieces of this class, the poet is the sturdy exposer of the crafty policy of the see of Rome, and of the mischiefs which had resulted from investing the church with political power. He laughs at that strange blending of spiritual and temporal interests and feelings, which produced an anomalous herd, as he observes, of "preaching knights and fighting priests;" but he is nevertheless a warm exhorter to what he considers the Christian duty of engaging in the holy wars. The circumstances under which his patron Frederic was placed must, in truth, have often excited strong conflicts of feeling, especially in those of his subjects who, while they resisted the pretensions of the Pope, conscientiously believed in the duty of engaging in that expedition which it was the pretended object of the ecclesiastical proceedings to enforce; and who must often have doubted whether that prince was not neglecting, or at any rate unreasonably postponing, a sacred Christian obligation.

Many of Walter's songs are of an exceedingly bold character, as opposed to the pretensions of the see of Rome; and that, not on merely political grounds, nor on objections to the moral character or present proceedings of its members; but on the broadest principles of resistance to priestly usurpation, well becoming the land which was to be the cradle of the Reformation. It has been already observed to what an extent Frederic II. and his politic chancellor encouraged a literary and poetic taste as inimical to the encroachments of superstition. Many of the earliest poets of Southern France are also more or less associated with heretical notions and practices; and there is an old tradition (unsupported indeed by direct historic evidence, but still curious as a sort of evidence of prevailing reputation), that the twelve real or imaginary "masters" or founders of song in Germany, were formally accused of heresy before the Emperor, and compelled to defend themselves in an open assembly in the presence of the Pope's legate.

Walter himself performed that duty which he enjoined so strongly on others; and though no precise date can be assigned to his expedition to the Holy Land, there seems every probability that he accompanied Frederic II. about the year 1228. One song seems written from the ranks of the holy army, on his passage, while full of zeal and hope; and another breathes a full strain of joy and exultation at finding

himself among those scenes which Scriptural recollections and religious associations rendered so dear and sacred. Proud indeed must have been the poet's triumph in bowing with his great patron at the tomb of his Saviour, once again redeemed from the hands of the Infidels by the prince whom it had been the delight of the church to traduce and vilify.

We have now traced our Minnesinger through thirty eventful years, by the details which his works afford; and it appears from the same evidence, that he continued to indulge his poetical taste for some years more. "Forty years and more," says he, "have I sung of love:" and it seems clear that he attained an advanced age, little blest by the gifts of fortune, but with an increasing ardour in his country's cause, and a more earnest inculcation of the precepts of religion, which he often enforced in strains of earnest devotional feeling. One of his last efforts appears to be his dialogue with "the world," in which he takes his leave of its cares and vanities:—

> Too well thy weakness have I proved;
> Now would I leave thee;—it is time....
> Good night! to thee, oh world, good night!
> I haste me to my home.

Where Walter spent the latter part of his life subsequently to his expedition to the Holy Land, does not appear; probably he remained abroad—perhaps

was detained somewhere on his journey home,—at all events it was after a long absence, and in his old age, that he returned to his native land. The feelings with which he revisited the scenes of his youth are pathetically expressed in a plaintive song, which commences thus :—

Ah! where are hours departed fled?
Is life a dream, or true indeed?
Did all my heart hath fashioned
From fancy's visitings proceed?
Yes! I have slept; and now unknown
To me the things best known before:
The land, the people, once mine own,
Where are they?—they are here no more:
My boyhood's friends, all aged, worn,
Despoil'd the woods, the fields, of home,
Only the stream flows on forlorn;
(Alas! that e'er such change should come!)
And he who knew me once so well
Salutes me now as one estranged:
The very earth to me can tell
Of nought but things perverted, changed:
And when I muse on other days,
That pass'd me as the dashing oars
The surface of the ocean raise,
Ceaseless my heart its fate deplores; &c.

The poet concludes his song by lamenting that cir-

cumstances (probably his poverty and infirmities) prevented him from returning to the Holy Land, to crown his days with that everlasting reward which the swords of younger and more favoured competitors were enabled to earn.

An ancient MS. preserves the tradition that Walter's mortal remains were deposited beneath a tree in the precincts of the minster at Wurtzburg; that by his will he directed the birds to be statedly fed upon his tomb; and that the following epitaph thus commemorated his name and talents:

> *Pascua* qui *volucrum* vivus, Walthere, fuisti,
> Qui flos eloquii, qui Palladis os, obiisti!
> Ergo quod aureolam probitas tua possit habere,
> Qui legit, hic dicat — "Deus istius miserere!"

THE TROUBADOURS.

Qui gais non es, com chantara?
E si chanta, qui l'auzira?

PISTOLETA.

TROUBADOURS.

THE COUNTESS DE DIE.

La Comtesse de Die belongs to the second half of the 12th century. Her history is generally connected with that of Rambaud d'Aurenga (Orange); and the songs of each relate to their mutual passion.

A chantar m' er de so qu' ieu no volria,
Tan me rancur de sel cui sui amia;
Quar ieu l' am mais que nulha res que sia;
Vas lui no m val merces ni cortezia,
Ni ma beutatz, ni mos pretz, ni mos sens;
Qu' en aissi m sui enganada e trahia,
Cum s' ieu agues vas lui fag falhimens.

I sing of one I would not sing,
Such anguish from my love hath sprung;
I love him more than earthly thing;
But beauty, wit, or pleadings, wrung
From my heart's depth, can gain for me
Nor gratitude nor courtesy;
And I am left, deceived, betray'd,
Of him, like frail or faithless maid.

On one sweet thought my soul has dwelt,—
That my unchanging faith was thine;
Not Seguis for Valensa felt
A love more pure and high than mine:
In all beside thou art above
My highest thoughts—but not in love,—
Cold as thou art, and proud to me,
To others all humility.

Yet must I wonder, gazing there
On that severe and chilling mien:
It is not just, another fair
Should fill the heart where I have been:
Whate'er her worth, remember thou
Love's early days, love's fondest vow;
Heaven grant no idle word of mine
Have caused this cold neglect of thine!

When I remember all thy worth,
Thy rank, thy honours,—well I see
There cannot be the heart on earth
That would not bend in love to thee:
But thou, whose penetrating eyes
Can quickly pierce through each disguise,
The tenderest, truest, heart wilt see,
And surely then remember ME.

On worth, on rank, I might rely,
On beauty, or, yet more, on love;
But one soft song at least I'll try—
A song of peace, thy heart to move:
And I would learn, beloved one, now
Why cold and harsh and rude art thou;
If love hath given her place to pride,
Or cold dislike in thee preside?

This, and much more my messenger should say,
Warning all hearts 'gainst Pride's relentless sway.

PONS DE CAPDUEIL,

Is also of the second half of the 12th century. He was a baron of Pui, "e trobava, e viulava, e cantava be." His mistress, to whom his songs were addressed, and whose death the following laments, was Azalais, the wife of Ozils de Mercuer, "un gran comte d'Alvernhe." On her decease "el se croset, e passet outra mar, e lai moric."

De totz caitius sui ieu aisselh que plus
Ai gran dolor, e suefre greu turmen,
Per qu' ieu volgra murir, e fora m gen
Qui m' aucizes, pois tan sui esperdutz;

Que viures m'es marrimens et esglais,
Pus morta es ma dona N'Azalais.

Of all whom grief in bonds of slavery
Most straitly holds, the veriest wretch am I:
Death is my heart's desire; he that should bring
That death to me would bring a welcome thing.
O'er life's sad remnant grief alone is spread,
Nought, nought but grief, since Azalais is dead:
Grief, sorrow, sense of loss, weigh down my head.
Then hasten, death, my willing spirit cries,
For never could'st thou seize a better, fairer prize.

Well may we weep, well sigh in spirit o'er her,
So fair a creature ne'er was form'd before her;
And who in times to come such courtesy,
Such worth, such beauty as hath been, shall see?
Ah! what avail wit, honour, sprightly guise,
Graceful address, and pleasant courtesies,
And kindest words, and actions ever wise?
Ah sad, bereaved age! for *thee* I mourn;
Small boast indeed is thine, such jewel from thee torn.

Well may we judge that spirits of love on high
Joy to receive her in their company;
Oft have I heard, and deem'd the witness true,
"Whom *man* delights in, *God* delights in too:"

Then well I trust that in that palace gate,
Mid lilies sweet, and roses delicate,
Blissful she dwells, while angels round her wait,
And sing her praise with loud acclaim, and tell
How fit such beauteous flower in Paradise to dwell!

Youth's gay delights for me no charms bestow,
This busy world is nothing to me now;
Counts, dukes and barons in their 'custom'd pride
No more are great; I turn from all aside,
And thousand ladies cannot fill the void.
E'en heaven itself seems, angry, to look down,
Its beauteous gift recalling with a frown:
With her our songs, our mirth away are sped,
And nought remains but sighs and vain desires instead.

...

And woe is me for thee, lost Azalais!
Henceforth no joy within my soul may stay;
Henceforth I take my leave of song, for aye;
Tears, sighs, and sorrow, henceforth ever come,
And wrap my spirit in unceasing gloom.

Thus Andrieu, then, I every hope resign,
All thoughts of love, that never shall be mine.

BERNARD DE VENTADOUR.

Bernard attached himself to Eleanor of Guienne, who went into the North to marry Louis VII., and afterwards became the queen of Henry II. of England. This of course fixes his epoch. The reader will find in Dante (Parad. c. xx.), the same thought as that which opens the first of the following songs:—

Qual lodoletta, che 'n aere si spazia
Prima cantando, e poi tace contenta
Dell' ultima dolcezza, che la sazia.

The same idea is beautifully exprest by another Troubadour, Aimeri de Sarlat:—

Aissi muev mas chansos
Com la laudeta fai,
Que poian haut s'en vai,
Et de sus deisen jos;
Pueis pauza s'en la via,
Chantan:
Per aquel eis semblan
Ai fait un sonet gai,
C'ades pug, e s'enbria
D'aut entro la fenia.

M. Raynouard has published the air which the MS. gives to the ensuing song; but a friend, well

skilled in such matters, has endeavoured in vain to comprehend it. It is perhaps unskilfully copied.

Quan vey la laudeta mover
De joi sas alas contra 'l rai,
Que s'oblida e s'laissa cazer
Per la doussor qu'al cor li 'n vai;
Ailas! qual enueia m'en ve,
Cui qu'ieu ne veia jauzion!
Meraveillas m'ai, quar desse
Lo cor de dezirier no m fon.

When I behold the lark upspring
To meet the bright sun joyfully,
How he forgets to poise his wing
In his gay spirit's revelry,—
Alas! that mournful thoughts should spring
E'en from that happy songster's glee!
Strange, that such gladdening sight should bring
Not joy, but pining care to me!

I thought my heart had known the whole
Of love, but small its knowledge proved;
For still the more my longing soul
Loves on, itself the while unloved:
She stole my heart, myself she stole,
And all I prized from me removed,
She left me but the fierce control
Of vain desires for her I loved.

All self-command is now gone by,
E'er since the luckless hour when she
Became a mirror to my eye,
Whereon I gazed complacently:
Thou fatal mirror! there I spy
Love's image; and my doom shall be,
Like young Narcissus, thus to sigh,
And thus expire, beholding thee.

Pel dols chant qu'el rossinhols fai
La nueg quan mi soi adurmitz,
Revelh de joi totz esbaitz
Pensius d'amor, e cossirans;
Qu' aisso es mos mielhers mestiers,
Qu' ancse amei joi voluntiers;
El ab joi comensa mos chans.

When nightingales their lulling song
For me have breathed the whole night long,
Thus soothed, I sleep;—yet, when awake,
Again will joy my heart forsake,
Pensive, in love, in sorrow, pining,
All other fellowship declining:
Not such was once my blest employ,
When all my heart, my song, was joy.

And none who knew that joy, but well
Could tell how bright, unspeakable,
How far above all common bliss,
Was then my heart's pure happiness;
How lightly on my fancy ranged,
Gay tale and pleasant jest exchanged,
Dreaming such joy must ever be
In love like that I bore for thee.

They that behold me little dream
How wide my spirit soars from them,
And, borne on fancy's pinion, roves
To seek the beauteous form it loves:
Know, that a faithful herald flies
To bear her image to my eyes,—
My constant thought,—for ever telling
How fair she is, all else excelling.

I know not when we meet again,
For grief hath rent my heart in twain:
For thee the royal court I fled,—
But guard me from the ills I dread,
And quick I'll join the bright array
Of courteous knights and ladies gay.

Ugonet, faithful messenger!
This to the Norman queen go bear,
And sing it softly to her ear.

Quant erba vertz, e fuelha par,
E 'l flor brotonon per verjan,
E 'l rossinhols autet e clar
Leva sa votz e mov son chan,
Joy ai de luy, e joy ai de la flor,
Joy ai de me, e de mi dons maior;
Vas totas partz sui de joy claus e seinhs,
Mas ilh es joys que totz los autres vens. ....

When grass grows green, and fresh leaves spring,
And flowers are budding on the plain,
When nightingales so sweetly sing,
And through the greenwood swells the strain,—
Then joy I in the song and in the flower,
Joy in myself, but in my lady more;
All objects round my spirit turns to joy,
But most from *her* my rapture rises high.....

FOLQUET DE MARSEILLE.

Folquet was the son of a Genoese merchant established at Marseilles. His poetical career terminated in 1200, when he took the Cistercian habit and order. In his re-appearance in public, and his subse-

quent elevation, he furnishes one of the few instances of the Troubadour feeling enlisted on the side of ecclesiastical bigotry. His well known zeal against the Albigenses met with the appropriate reward of a bishopric. It was one of his brother Cistercians probably, who, at the storming of Beziers in 1209, followed his counsel in exclaiming, when they paused lest true catholics should fall with the heretics, "Kill them all, God will know his own." He returned to the cloister—let us hope in repentance, and died in 1231. Throughout the song of five stanzas, from which the two first are here taken, the same rimes are carried on in the same places. The translation follows on this plan.

Ja no volgra qu' hom auzis
Los doutz chans dels auzellos
Mas cill qui son amoros:
Que res tan no m' esbaudis
Co il auzelet per la planha;
E ilh belha cui soi aclis,
Cella m platz mais que chansos,
Volta, ni lais de Bretanha.

I would not any man should hear
The birds that sweetly sing above,
Save he who knows the power of love;
For nought beside can soothe or cheer

My soul, like that sweet harmony;
Or like herself, who, yet more dear,
Hath greater power my soul to move
Than songs or lays of Brittany.

In her I joy and hope; yet ne'er
Too daring would my spirit prove;
For he who highest soars above,
Feels but his fall the more severe:
Then what shall I a gainer be,
If on her lips no smile appear?
Shall I in cold despair still love?—
Oh yes! in patient constancy.

BERTRAND DE BORN.

The adventures of this extraordinary character, with whose poetry the history of his age is so interwoven, may be read in Millot, or in the curious Provençal life of him, reprinted by M. Raynouard in his fifth volume. It needs only to be here observed, that his period is the last half of the 12th century. Three

of his pieces are selected, the second of which has already appeared in Mr. T. Roscoe's translation of Sismondi, and the third (a free version) is in return borrowed from that work with his permission.

Domna, puois de mi no us cal,
E partit m' avetz de vos, &c.

LADY, since thou hast driven me forth,
Since thou, unkind, hast banish'd me,
(Though cause of such neglect be none,)
Where shall I turn from thee?
Ne'er can I see
Such joy as I have seen before,
If, as I fear, I find no more
Another fair,—from thee removed,
I'll sigh to think I e'er was loved.

And since my eager search were vain,
One lovely as thyself to find;
A heart so matchlessly endow'd,
Or manners so refined,
So gay, so kind,
So courteous, gentle, debonair,—
I'll rove, and catch from every fair
Some winning grace, and form a whole,
To glad (till thou return) my soul.

The roses of thy glowing cheek;
Fair Sembelis! I'll steal from thee;
That lovely smiling look I'll take,
Yet rich thou still shalt be,
In whom we see
All that can deck a lady bright:
And your enchanting converse, light,
Fair Elis, will I borrow too,
That she in wit may shine like you.

And from the noble Chales, I
Will beg that neck of ivory white,
And her fair hands of loveliest form
I'll take; and speeding, light,
My onward flight,
Earnest at Roca Choart's gate,
Fair Agnes I will supplicate
To grant her locks, more bright that those
Which Tristan loved on Yseult's brows.

And, Audiartz, though on me thou frown,
All that thou hast of courtesy
I'll have,—thy look, thy gentle mien,
And all the unchanged constancy
That dwells with thee.
And, Miels de Ben, on thee I'll wait
For thy light shape, so delicate,
That in thy fairy form of grace
My lady's image I may trace.

The beauty of those snow-white teeth
From thee, famed Faidit, I'll extort,
The welcome, affable and kind,
To all the numbers that resort
Unto her court.
And Bels Miraills shall crown the whole,
With all her sparkling flow of soul;
Those mental charms that round her play,
For ever wise, yet ever gay.

Be m play lo douz temps de pascor
Que fai fuelhas e flors venir;
E play mi quant aug la baudor
Dels auzels que fan retentir
Lor chan per lo bòscatge;
E plai me quan vey sus els pratz
Tendas e pavallos fermatz;
E plai m' en mon coratge,
Quan vey per campanhas rengatz
Cavalliers ab cavals armatz.

THE beautiful spring delights me well,
When flowers and leaves are growing;
And it pleases my heart to hear the swell
Of the birds' sweet chorus flowing
In the echoing wood;

And I love to see, all scatter'd around,
Pavillions, tents, on the martial ground;
And my spirit finds it good
To see, on the level plains beyond,
Gay knights and steeds caparison'd.

It pleases me, when the lancers bold
Set men and armies flying;
And it pleases me, too, to hear around
The voice of the soldiers crying;
And joy is mine
When the castles strong, besieged, shake,
And walls uprooted, totter and crack;
And I see the foemen join,
On the moated shore all compass'd round
With the palisade and guarded mound.....

Lances and swords, and stained helms,
And shields dismantled and broken,
On the verge of the bloody battle scene,
The field of wrath betoken;
And the vassals are there,
And there fly the steeds of the dying and dead;
And where the mingled strife is spread,
The noblest warrior's care
Is to cleave the foeman's limbs and head,—
The conqueror less of the living than dead.

I tell you that nothing my soul can cheer,
Or banqueting, or reposing,
Like the onset cry of "Charge them" rung
From each side, as in battle closing,
Where the horses neigh,
And the call to "aid" is echoing loud;
And there on the earth the lowly and proud
In the foss together lie;
And yonder is piled the mangled heap
Of the brave that scaled the trench's steep.

Barons! your castles in safety place,
Your cities and villages too,
Before ye haste to the battle scene;
And, Papiol! quickly go,
And tell the Lord of "Oc and No"*
That peace already too long hath been!

Those who wish to form an adequate idea of the incorrectness and ignorance with which the Troubadour remains were copied from one work to another, before M. Raynouard's publication, may com-

* "Yes and No"—a title designating Richard Cœur de Lion.

pare the original of this song, printed in his third volume, p. 142, with that given in Sismondi.

Ieu m' escondisc, domna, que mal non mi er
De so qu' an dig de mi fals lauzengier; &c.

I CANNOT hide from thee how much I fear
The whispers breathed by flatterers in thine ear
Against my faith:—but turn not, oh! I pray,
That heart so true, so faithful, so sincere,
So humble and so frank, to me so dear,
O lady, turn it not from me away!

So may I lose my hawk ere he can spring,
Borne from my hand by some bold falcon's wing,
Mangled and torn before my very eye,
If every word thou utterest does not bring
More joy to me than fortune's favouring,
Or all the bliss another's love might buy!

So, with my shield on neck, mid storm and rain,
With vizor blinding me, and shorten'd rein,
With stirrups far too long, so may I ride;
So may my trotting charger give me pain,
So may the ostler treat me with disdain,
As they who tell those tales have grossly lied!

When I approach the gaming board to play,
May I not turn a penny all the day;
Or may the board be shut, the dice untrue,
If the truth dwell not in me when I say,
No other fair e'er wiled my heart away
From her I've long desired and loved—from you!

Or, prisoner to some noble, may I fill,
Together with three more, some dungeon chill,
Unto each other odious company;—
Let master, servants, porters, try their skill,
And use me for a target if they will,
If ever I have loved aught else but thee!

So may another knight make love to you,
And so may I be puzzled what to do;
So may I be becalm'd 'mid oceans wide;
May the king's porter beat me black and blue,
And may I fly ere I the battle view,
As they that slander me have grossly lied!

ALPHONSO II., KING OF ARRAGON.

Alphonso was the son of Raymond Berengar IV., count of Barcelona, who married the heiress of Arragon, and inherited the poetic taste and reputation of his illustrious family. He attained the crown in 1162, and died in 1196. He was a Troubadour, and therefore his cotemporary poets overlooked his kingly vices and worthlessness: he was a king; and therefore we give place here to a song which has few other claims to our notice.

Per mantas guizas m' es datz
Joys e deport e solatz;
Que per vergiers e per pratz,
E per fuelhas e per flors,
E pel temps qu' es refrescatz,
Vei alegrar chantadors;
Mas al meu chan neus ni glatz
No m' ajuda, ni estatz,
Ni res, mas dieus et amors.

Many the joys my heart has seen,
From varied sources flowing,
From gardens gay and meadows green,
From leaves and flowerets blowing,

And spring her freshening hours bestowing,—
All these delight the bard: but here
Their power to sadden or to cheer
In this my song will not appear,
Where nought but love is glowing.

And though I would not dare despise
The smiling flowers, the herbage springing,
The beauteous spring's unclouded skies,
And all the birds' sweet singing:
Yet my heart's brightest joy is springing
From her, the fairest of the fair;
Beauty and wit are joined there,
And in my song I'll honour her,
My ready tribute bringing.....

When I remember our farewell,
As from her side I parted,
Sorrow and joy alternate swell,
To think how broken-hearted,
While from her eyelids tear-drops started,
"O soon," she said, "my loved one, here,
O soon, in pity, re-appear!"
Then back I'll fly, for none so dear
As her from whom I parted.

ARNAUD DE MARVEIL

THIS Troubadour, whom Petrarch styles "il *men* famoso Arnaldo," (though he certainly appears to us to be the one who deserved to be the *most* so,) flourished in the latter end of the 12th century. He was one of the class of roving poets of low origin who sought their subsistence at the courts of the South: "car no podia viure per las suas letras, el s'en anet per lo mon; e sabia ben trobar e s'entendia be." His adventures show strikingly the license given to those who possessed poetic talent, and the equality with his rivals of whatever rank, to which, in all matters connected with his art, it raised the minstrel. Every singer must have a lady for his theme; and when Arnaud had chosen the countess of Beziers, even Alphonso IV. of Castille was his avowed rival, and became so jealous of the pretensions of the strolling minstrel, that the banishment of the latter was found to be the only remedy.

Belh m' es quan lo veus m' alena
En Abril ans qu' intre Mays,
E tota la nuegz serena
Chanta 'l rossinhols e 'l jays;
Quecx auzel en son lenguatge,
Per la frescor del mati,
Van menan joy d' agradatge,
Com quecx ab sa par s' aizi!

O how sweet the breeze of April,
Breathing soft, as May draws near!
While through nights serene and gentle,
Songs of gladness meet the ear;
Every bird his well-known language
Warbling in the morning's pride,
Revelling on in joy and gladness
By his happy partner's side.

When around me all is smiling,
When to life the young birds spring,
Thoughts of love I cannot hinder
Come, my heart inspiriting:
Nature, habit, both incline me
In such joys to bear my part;
With such sounds of bliss around me,
Who could wear a sadden'd heart?

Fairer than the far-famed Helen,
Lovelier than the flowerets gay;—
Snow-white teeth, and lips truth-telling,
Heart as open as the day,
Golden hair, and fresh bright roses:—
Heaven, that form'd a thing so fair,
Knows that never yet another
Lived, who could with her compare.....

PIERRE VIDAL.

VIDAL, who has been called the Don Quixotte of Troubadours, died in 1229. He was the son of a tradesman of Toulouse, but rose to the first eminence. The jealousy of a nobleman of Marseilles drove him from his native country, on which occasion the second of the following pieces was written. He then followed Richard Cœur de Lion to Palestine, where chivalry, and perhaps misfortune, turned his brain; and the trick of marrying him to a sham niece of the Emperor of the East was played upon him. The old Provençal historian gives his character thus succinctly:—"Cantava mielhs c'om del mon, e fo bon trobaires; e fo dels plus fols home que mais fossen." The first of the following pieces is an union of two fragments.

La lauzeta e 'l rossinhol
Am mais que nulh' autr' auzel,
Que pel joy del temps novel
Comenson premier lur chan:
Et ieu, ad aquel semblan,
Quan li autre trobador
Estan mut, ieu chant d' amor
De ma dona Na Vierna.

Of all sweet birds, I love the most
The lark and nightingale;
For they the first of all awake,
The opening spring with songs to hail.

And I, like them, when silently
Each Troubadour sleeps on,
Will wake me up, and sing of love
And thee, Vierna, fairest one!....

The rose on thee its bloom bestow'd,
The lily gave its white,
And nature, when it plann'd thy form,
A model framed of fair and bright.

For nothing sure that could be given
To thee hath been denied;
That there each thought of love and joy
In bright perfection might reside.

Ab l' alen tir vas me l' aire
Qu' ieu sen venir de Proensa;
Tot quant es de lai m' agensa,
Si que, quan n' aug ben retraire,
Ieu m' o escout en rizen,
E 'n deman per un mot cen,
Tan m' es bel quan n' aug ben dire.

I EAGERLY inhale the breeze
From thee, sweet Provence, blowing;
And all that's thine delights me so,
Such pleasant thoughts bestowing,
That if thy very name is named
I listen joyously,
And ask a hundred words for one—
So sweet to hear of thee.

And surely none can name a spot
So sweet in memory biding,
As 'twixt the Durance and the sea,
Where the swift Rhone is gliding:
There ever fresh delights abound,
There, midst its people gay,
I left my heart with one whose smile
Would drive each grief away.

Ne'er let the day be lightly named
When first I saw that lady:
From her my joy and pleasure flows;
And he whose tongue is ready
To give her praise, whate'er he says,
Of fair or good, is true:
She is the brightest, past compare,
That e'er the wide world knew.

If aught of goodness or of grace
Be mine, *hers* is the glory;
She led me on in wisdom's path,
And set the light before me:
In her I joy, in her I sing,
If ever, pleasantly;
The sweetness there is not my own,
But hers in whom I joy.

PIERRE D'AUVERGNE.

Pierre d'Auvergne was a Troubadour of some note at the beginning of the 13th century. When the following translation was made, the original had not been published; but it has since appeared in "Le Parnasse Occitanien," and also in M. Raynouard's fifth volume. Our version was formed from Millot's prose translation, and will be found materially to abridge the prolixity of the original; but it represents the burden of the song tolerably well, and is therefore left as it is.

Rossinhol en son repaire
M' iras ma dona vezer;
E ill diguas lo mieu afaire, &c.

Go, nightingale, and find the beauty I adore;
My heart to her outpour:
Bid her each feeling tell,
And bid her charge thee well
To say that she forgets me not.
Let her not stay thee there,
But come and quick declare
The tidings thou hast brought;
For none beside so dear have I,
And long for news from none so anxiously.

Away the bird has flown; away
Lightly he goes, inquiring round—
Where shall that lovely one be found?
And, when he sees her, tunes the lay;
That lay which sweetly sounds afar,
Oft heard beneath the evening star.

"Sent by thy true love, lady fair!" he sings,
"I come to sing to thee.
And what sweet song shall be
His glad reward when, eager, up he springs
To meet me as I come
On weary pinion home?

Sweet lady! let me tell
Kind words to him who loves thee well.
And why these cold and keen delays?
Love should be welcomed while it stays,
It is a flower that fadeth soon;
Oh profit, lady! by its short-lived noon."

Then that enchanting fair in accents sweet replied,
"Thy faithful nightingale
Has told his pleasant tale;
And he shall tell thee how, by absence tried,
Here, far from thee, my love, I rest;
For long thy stay hath been.
Such grief had I foreseen,
Not with my love so soon hadst thou been blest.
Here then for thee I wait;
With thee is joy and mirth,
And nothing here on earth
With thee can e'er compete.

"True love, like gold, is well refined;
And mine doth purify my mind:
Go then, sweet bird, and quickly say,
And in thy most bewitching way,
How well I love.—Fly! haste thee on!
Why tarriest thou?—What! not yet gone?"

GIRAUD DE BORNEIL.

GIRAUD DE BORNEIL is said to have been of low extraction. The Provençal historian says—"fo meiller trobaire que negus d'aquels qu'eron estat denan ni foron apres lui, per que fo apellatz *Maestre dels Trobadors:*" and he adds, that he was used during the winter to rest "a scola," for the purpose of study; and during the summer to travel from court to court with two minstrels or "cantadors," who sang his songs. It is added, that he never would marry, but gave all he gained to his poor parents, and the church of the town where he was born. Nostradamus says he died in 1278.

Bel companhos, si dormetz o velhatz,
Non dormatz plus, qu' el jorn es apropchatz,
Qu' en orien vey l' estela creguda
Qu' adutz lo jorn, qu' ieu l' ai ben conoguda,
El ades sera l' alba.

Bel companhos, en chantan vos apel,
Non dormatz plus, qu' ieu aug chantar l' auzel
Que vai queren lo jorn per lo boscatge,
Et ai paor qu' el gilos vos assatge,
Et ades sera l' alba.

Companion dear! or sleeping or awaking,
Sleep not again! for lo! the morn is nigh,
And in the east that early star is breaking,
The day's forerunner, known unto mine eye;
The morn, the morn is near.

Companion dear! with carols sweet I'll call thee;
Sleep not again! I hear the birds' blithe song
Loud in the woodlands; evil may befall thee,
And jealous eyes awaken, tarrying long,
Now that the morn is near.

Companion dear! forth from the window looking,
Attentive mark the signs of yonder heaven;
Judge if aright I read what they betoken:
Thine all the loss, if vain the warning given;
The morn, the morn is near.

Companion dear! since thou from hence wert straying,
Nor sleep nor rest these eyes have visited;
My prayers unceasing to the Virgin paying,
That thou in peace thy backward way might tread.
The morn, the morn, is near.

Companion dear! hence to the fields with me!
Me thou forbad'st to slumber through the night,
And I have watch'd that livelong night for thee;
But thou in song or me hast no delight,
And now the morn is near.

ANSWER.

Companion dear! so happily sojourning,
So blest am I, I care not forth to speed:
Here brightest beauty reigns, her smiles adorning
Her dwelling-place,—then wherefore should I heed
The morn or jealous eyes?

GAUBERT AMIELS.

GAUBERT AMIELS was a knight of Gascony; of what precise time is not known. He had the merit of making harmonious verses, of being humble in spirit and affectionate in heart. The following song is taken up at the second verse.

De trop ric' amor non ai soing,
Sol de mon paratge n' agues;
Que 'l poders ni 'l semblan non es
E mi, ni sui fatz, dieus el doing,
D' enquerre ric joi ni s' escai;
N' esdevenir que ben o sai,
Noi poiria quan bei poignes.

I COVET not a high-born dame;
An equal in degree
Is all I seek; for wealth and fame
Heaven never meant for me.
I wish not for the joys that reign
Mid courtiers great and high;
For were I sure success to gain,
It would not bring me joy.

I ever loved the single bird
That sings beside my bower,
More than the noisy songsters heard
At distance, hovering o'er;
Nor would I seek the lady's grace
Who seeketh not for mine,
Like that poor swain who left his place
For regal dame to pine.

For lofty aims I do not care,
To courtiers leave them free:
But there is ONE, whose chain I wear,
For she has vanquish'd me:
From Paris e'en to the Garonne
There is not one so fair,
Nor, noble though they be, not one
Who thus my love can share.

To her, then, will I grateful bow,
And willing thanks repay
For kind and courteous acts, that show
More fair each coming day.
Nor shall it cost a single sigh
That *higher* dames there be;
Since few indeed can rank *so high*,—
So fair, so bright is she.

Thus equal, not too high or low,
Happy I love; and, loving, know
How blest I am;—more blest by far
Than if my love more lofty were.

MARCABRUS.

The precise age of this Troubadour is uncertain. Nostradamus places him late; but the historical reference in the following song cannot certainly be to a later date than the crusade of St. Louis in 1269.

A la fontana del vergier,
On l' erb er vertz, josta 'l gravier,
A l' ombra d' un fust domesgier,
En aiziment de blancas flors
E de novelh chan costumier,
Trobey sola, ses companhier,
Selha que no vol mon solatz.

By yonder fountain in the grove,
Where the green grass e'en from above
Down to the water's pebbly bed
Its verdant covering hath outspread,
There, 'neath a tree, 'mid white flowers springing,
Lovely and sad, a new song singing,
Sat the disdainful fair whose scorn my heart is wringing.

Beauteous her form ;—yon castle walls
His own her titled father calls :
And when I thought the birds' sweet art
And blooming spring might touch her heart,
And by their eloquence prepare
For me a more attentive ear,
Sudden the scene was changed, and all was sorrow there.

And there, beside the stream, she grieved,
And tears she shed, and sighs up-heaved :

"O thou," she cried, "the world's great King,—
Saviour! from thee my sorrows spring;
Thy griefs are mine; since thus for thee
The brave ones of the earth must be
Wanderers in distant climes;—such is thy high decree.

"For thee my heart's delight goes forth,
The noblest, best, in wit or worth;
And sorrow only tarries here—
Care, and the ever-flowing tear.
Woe to thee, Louis! whose command
This anguish for my soul hath plann'd:
Woe to thee, king! who love hast banish'd from the land!"

I heard; and, as I heard, drew near,
And stood beside that fountain clear:
And, "O fair maid," I cried, "forbear,
Nor mar that face, nor let despair
Thus deep upon thy spirit seize;
He that can clothe the barren trees
With new-born leaves again, thine anguish can appease."

"Sir knight, I have not now to learn,"
She said, "how Heaven in love can turn

To me and thousand sinners more,
In distant days, when time is o'er;
But chide not thou, though tears I shed:
It is enough—my joy is fled,
And far, far off the joy which thou hast promised."

Though there seems every probability that the above song is intended as the lament of a lady at her separation from a knight who had followed St. Louis to the crusades, it is possible that the separation might be occasioned by the unrelenting persecutions which were directed against the Albigenses. The ultimate result of the contest was the complete extinction of chivalry and poetry in the South; and the lady would in this view of the case be a sorrower over the loss of her heretical love. In connexion with this subject we may introduce, rather for its historical curiosity than for the merit either of the original or our translation, the following song by Tomiers, a knight of Tarrascon, stimulating the martial spirits of the South to resist the cruel bigotry and hypocrisy with which the French court was laying waste the fairest provinces, under the pretence of zeal for the interests of religion.

De chantar farai
Una esdemessa,
Que temps ven e vai,
E reman promessa,
E de gran esmai
Fai deus tost esdessa.
Segur estem, seignors,
E ferms de ric socors.

I'll make a song shall utter forth
My full and free complaint,
To see the heavy hours pass on,
And witness to the feint
Of coward souls, whose vows were made
In falsehood, and are yet unpaid.
Yet, noble sirs, we will not fear,
Strong in the hope of succours near.

Yes! full and ample help for us
Shall come—so trusts my heart;
God fights for us, and these our foes,
The French, must soon depart:
For on the souls that fear not God,
Soon, soon shall fall the vengeful rod.
Then, noble sirs, we will not fear,
Strong in the hope of succours near.

And hither they believe to come
(The treacherous, base crusaders!)—

But, e'en as quickly as they come,
We'll chase those fierce invaders:
Without a shelter they shall fly
Before our valiant chivalry.
Then, noble sirs, we will not fear,
Strong in the hope of succours near.

And e'en if Frederic, on the throne
Of powerful Germany,
Submit the cruel ravages
Of Louis' hosts to see,
Yet, in the breast of England's king,
Wrath deep and vengeful shall upspring.
Then, noble sirs, we will not fear,
Strong in the hope of succours near.

Not much those meek and holy men—
The traitorous bishops—mourn,
Though from our hands the sepulchre
Of our dear Lord be torn;
More tender far their anxious care
For the rich plunder of Belcaire.
But, noble sirs, we will not fear,
Strong in the hope of succours near.

And look at our proud cardinal,
Whose hours in peace are past;
Look at his splendid dwelling-place
(Pray Heaven it may not last!)—

He heeds not, while he lives in state,
What ills on Damietta wait.
But, noble sirs, we will not fear,
Strong in the hope of succours near.

I cannot think that Avignon
Will lose its holy zeal,—
In this our cause so ardently
Its citizens can feel.
Then shame to him who will not bear
In this our glorious cause his share!
And, noble sirs, we will not fear,
Strong in the hope of succours near.

TROUVÈRES.

LE CHATELAIN DE COUCY.

THE pedigree of the noble family of Coucy is ably and satisfactorily elucidated by Laborde, in whose "Essay on Music" is to be found also the affecting narrative of the poet's unfortunate passion for la Dame de Fayel. The first Raoul Sire de Coucy died at the siege of Acre in 1191: but Laborde thinks that our poet was his nephew Raoul, who died, however, nearly about the same time. The Raoul to whom Thibaud king of Navarre addresses one of his pieces, M. Laborde conceives to be Raoul II. the grandson of Raoul I. Raoul II. died about 1250. The pride of this family may be judged by the characteristic motto of one of the Sires:—

"Je ne suis Roi, ni Ducs, Prince ni Comte aussi,
Je suis le Sire de Coucy."

Commencement de douce seson bele
Que je voi revenir,
Remembrance d'amors qui me rapele
Dont ja ne puis partir,

Et la mauviz qui commence a tentir,
Et li douz sons dou ruissel de gravele
Que je voi resclaircir,
Me font resouvenir
De la ou tuit mi bon desir
Sont, et seront, jusqu'au morir.

THE first approach of the sweet spring
Returning here once more,—
The memory of the love that holds
In my fond heart such power,—
The thrush again his song essaying,—
The little rills o'er pebbles playing,
And sparkling as they fall,—
The memory recall
Of her on whom my heart's desire
Is—shall be—fix'd till I expire.

With every season fresh and new
That love is more inspiring:
Her eyes, her face, all bright with joy,—
Her coming, her retiring,—
Her faithful words,—her winning ways,—
That sweet look, kindling up the blaze
Of love, so gently still,
To wound, but not to kill,—
So that when most I weep and sigh,
So much the higher springs my joy.

HUGUES D'ATHIES.

HUGUES D'ATHIES was grand panetier under Philip Augustus, and subsequently under Louis VIII. his successor.

Folz est qui a escient
Veut sor gravele semer;
Et cil plus qui entrepent
Volage femme a amer.

On n'i peut raison trouver;
Tost ame, et tost se repent,
Et tost fet celui dolent
Qui plus s'i cuide fier.

... FOOL! who from choice can spend his hours
Sowing the barren sand with flowers;—
And yet more weak, more foolish you,
Who seek a fickle fair to woo.

No certain rule her course presents;
Quickly she loves, as quick repents:
Her smiles shall nought but grief confer
On him who vainly trusts in her.

The valiant knight her love may boast,
But soon shall rue his labour lost;
His fate the mariner's shall be,
Braving untoward gales at sea.

Fit wooer he for such an one
The flatterer, with his wily tongue,
Who knows the way, by shrewd address,
To crown his purpose with success.

THIBAUD, KING OF NAVARRE.

SOMETHING has already been said of this prince's poetry and history. He was born in 1201, and died in 1253. His songs have had the good fortune to meet with a most learned and industrious editor in M. Ravallière, who has perhaps bestowed more pains on them than their intrinsic merit can be said to have deserved. The following seems written on the eve of a crusade to which he went in 1238.

Dame, ensi est qu'il m'en convient aler,
Et departir de la doce contrée,
Ou tant ai mauz soffers et endurez;
Quant je vos lais, droiz est, que je m'en hée:
Dex! porquoi fu la terre d'outremer,
Qui tant amans aura fait desevrer,
Dont puis ne fu l'amour reconforté,
Ne ne porent lor joie remembrer?

Lady, the fates command, and I must go,—
Leaving the pleasant land so dear to me:
Here my heart suffer'd many a heavy woe;
But what is left to love, thus leaving thee?
Alas! that cruel land beyond the sea!
Why thus dividing many a faithful heart,
Never again from pain and sorrow frée,
Never again to meet, when thus they part?

I see not, when thy presence bright I leave,
How wealth, or joy, or peace can be my lot;
Ne'er yet my spirit found such cause to grieve
As now in leaving thee: and if thy thought
Of me in absence should be sorrow-fraught,
Oft will my heart repentant turn to thee,
Dwelling, in fruitless wishes, on this spot,
And all the gracious words here said to me.

O gracious God! to thee I bend my knee,
For thy sake yielding all I love and prize;
And O how mighty must that influence be,
That steals me thus from all my cherish'd joys!
Here, ready, then, myself surrendering,
Prepared to serve thee, I submit; and ne'er
To one so faithful could I service bring,
So kind a master, so beloved and dear.

And strong my ties *—my grief unspeakable!
Grief, all my choicest treasures to resign;
Yet stronger still the' affections that impel
My heart tow'rd Him, the God whose love is mine.—
That holy love, how beautiful! how strong!
Even wisdom's favourite sons take refuge there;
'Tis the redeeming gem that shines among
Men's darkest thoughts—for ever bright and fair.

---

* Reinmar der Alte, a Minnesinger, dwells in the same manner, in one of his crusade songs, on the contending emotions of zeal in the holy cause and attachment to friends at home.

"Go hence, my thoughts, and wander home,
Around your father-land to roam!
Yet tarry not, but quickly greet
The circle there of friends so sweet;
Then haste ye back, and share my pain,
The pardon of my sins to gain." &c.

GACE BRULEZ.

Gace Brulez was the friend of Thibaud, and flourished during the same period.

Les oisellons de mon païs
Ai oïs en Bretaigne:
A lor chant m'est il bien avis
Qu'en la douce compaigne *
Les oï jadis.
Se g'i ai mespris,
Il m'ont en si doux penser mis
Qu'a chançon faire me suis pris,
Tant que je parataigne
Ce qu'amors m'ont lonc tens promis.....

The birds, the birds of mine own land
I heard in Brittany;
And as they sung, they seem'd to me
The very same I heard with thee.
And if it were indeed a dream,
Such thoughts they taught my soul to frame,
That straight a plaintive number came,
Which still shall be my song,
Till that reward is mine which love hath promised long.....

* Ravallière (I. 236.) reads "Champaigne."

GOBIN DE REIMS.

THIS poet's age reaches to the reign of St. Louis.

Mult seraie bone vie
De bien amer,
Qui aurait bele amie
Pour deporter;
Sanz orgueil, sanz folie,
Et sanz guiler,
Ne ja n'eust envie
D'autrui amer;
Ne me vousist fausser;
Mes, com loial amie,
Celui amer
Qui de fin cuer la prie.

SWEET life indeed it were,
His joy to prove,
Who in his lady fair
Finds a true love:
No guile, no folly there,
No fickle pride;
Seeking her heart to share
With none beside,
To treachery unknown,
Faithful and fervent proved,
Loving that only one,
By whom beloved!

RAOUL COMTE DE SOISSONS.

RAOUL appears to have been another cotemporary and friend of Thibaud king of Navarre. The following piece is taken from the "Anthologie Françoise;" but some alteration may be suspected. Ravallière (vol. ii. p. 213) gives, from an anonymous poet of the age, one stanza, of which the song in the "Anthologie" appears to be a rifacciamento.

Ha belle blonde
Au cors si gent
Perle du monde
Que j'aime tant!
D'un chose ay bien grand desir,
C'est un doux baiser vous tollir.
Oui, belle blonde, &c.

Si par fortune
Courouceriez,
Cent fois pur une
Le vous rendrois volentiers;
Belle blonde, &c.

AH! beauteous maid,
Of form so fair!
Pearl of the world,
Beloved and dear!

How does my spirit eager pine,
But once to press those lips of thine;—
Yes, beauteous maid,
Of form so fair!
Pearl of the world,
Beloved and dear!

And if the theft
Thine ire awake,
A hundred fold
I'd give it back *—
Thou beauteous maid,
Of form so fair!
Pearl of the world,
Beloved and dear!

---

* The Troubadour Peyrols has the same thought:—

Gran talen ai qu'un baisar
Li pogues tolre o emblar;
E si pueis s'en iraissia,
Volentiers lo li rendria.

I'm pining, from that lady gay
A kiss to take or steal away;
And should the deed her coyness pain,
I'd freely give it back again.

JAQUES DE CHISON.

This poet also belongs to the first half of the 13th century.

Quant recommence et revient beaux estez,
Que foille et flor resplendit par boschage,
Que li froiz tanz de l'hyver est passez
Et cil oisel chantent en lor langage,
Lou chanterai,
Et envoisiez ferai
De cuer verai;
Ja por riens nel lairai;
Car ma dame qui tant est bone et sage
M' a commande a tenir mon usage
D' avoir cuer gai.

When the sweet days of summer come at last,
And leaves and flowers are in the forest springing;
When the cold time of winter's overpast,
And every bird his own sweet sóng is singing;
Then will I sing,
And joyous be,
Of careless heart,
Elate and free;
For she, my lady sweet and sage,
Bids me, as ever wont, engage
In joyful mood to be.

Nor is it yet the spirit of the season—
The summer time—that makes my song so gay;
But softer thoughts, and yet a sweeter reason—
Love,—that o'er all my happy heart hath sway;
That with delight my soul will ceaseless turn
Tow'rd her, I ween of all the world the best:
And if my songs be sweet, well may they learn
Sweetness from her whose love my heart has blest.

And since that love is rightfully my boon,
Well may I hold her *chief* within my soul,
Who helps my numbers, gives me song and tune,
And her own grace diffuses o'er the whole.
For when I think of those dear eyes of hers,
Whence the bright light of love is ever breaking,
Delight and hope that happy thought confers,
And I am blest beyond the power of speaking.

DOETE DE TROIES.

Fauchet mentions this ancient "Chanteresse et Trouverre." That singular and interesting poem, the "Bible Guyot de Provins," (published in Barbazan,) which well deserves a careful commentator, thus mentions her as having been present at the court of the Emperor Conrad at Mentz:—

> De Troye la bele Doete
> Y chantait cette chansonette,
> 'Quant revient la saison
> Que l' herbe reverdoie.'

In the "Poésies de Marguerite-Éléonore Clotilde de Vallon-Chalys, depuis Madame de Surville, Poëte François du XV^e^. siècle," is published the following piece, ascribed to Doete, and stated to have existed in MS. among the other specimens there given of a series of early French poetry. What degree of authenticity belongs to this book we do not know: undoubtedly, even if originals really existed, considerable liberties have been taken in their publication, as is plain from the extracts from Marie de France, which have since been correctly printed from the MSS. But the degree of coincidence with the undoubted originals that remains in those extracts, would incline the reader to believe that the *basis* of

other pieces, which we have not the same means of comparing, is also genuine.

Quant revient la saison que l'herbe reverdoie
Que di fleons clerets la terre alme s'ondoie,
Qu'esjoissent oysels de lors gracieux chantz
Li bois, et la pré, e li chamz,
Soir et matin, filles, n'allez sollettes
Quierre ez gazons derraines violettes;
Serpent y gist que n'y mord au talon,
Por ce n'est il, tendres poulettes,
Por ce n'est il que plus felon.

When comes the beauteous summer time,
And grass grows green once more,
And sparkling brooks the meadows lave
With fertilizing power;—
And when the birds rejoicing sing
Their pleasant songs again,
Filling the vales and woodlands gay
With their enlivening strain;—
Go not at eve nor morn, fair maids,
Unto the mead alone,
To seek the tender violets blue,
And pluck them for your own;
For there a snake lies hid, whose fangs
May leave untouch'd the *heel*,
But not the less—O not the less,
Your *hearts* his power shall feel.

BARBE DE VERRUE.

THIS lady (said to owe her name to a Comte de Verrue who adopted her) is the only other of M. de Surville's list whom we shall select. To her he attributes the beautiful romance of "Aucassin et Nicolette," and some other pieces;—on what authority is not told. The following song is at any rate pleasing and natural.

Voyd son hyver venir li sages
Come al fins biau jor, belle nuict;
Scet que sont roses por toz ages
Si por toz ages sont ennuict.

THE wise man sees his winter close
Like evening on a summer day;
Each age, he knows, its roses bears,
Its mournful moments and its gay.

Thus would I dwell with pleasing thought
Upon my spring of youthful pride;
Yet, like the festive dancer, glad
To rest in peace at eventide.

The gazing crowds proclaim'd me *fair*,
Ere, autumn-touch'd, my green leaves fell:
And now they smile, and call me *good*;—
Perhaps I like that name as well.

On beauty, bliss depends not; then
Why should I quarrel with old time?
He marches on:—how vain his power
With one whose *heart* is in its prime!

Though now perhaps a *little* old,
Yet still I love with youth to bide;
Nor grieve I if the gay coquettes
Seduce the gallants from my side.

And I can joy to see the nymphs
For fav'rite swains their chaplets twine,
In gardens trim, and bowers so green,
With flowerets sweet and eglantine.

I love to see a pair defy
The noontide heat in yonder shade;
To hear the village song of love
Sweet echoing through the woodland glade.

I joy too (though the idle crew
Mock somewhat at my lengthen'd tale,)
To see how lays of ancient loves
The listening circle round regale.

They fancy time for *them* stands still,
And pity *me* my hairs of gray,
And smile to hear how once their sires
To me could kneeling homage pay.

And I, too, smile, to gaze upon
These butterflies in youth elate,
So heedless, sporting round the flame
Where thousand such have met their fate

THE AUTHOR OF THE PARADIS D'AMOUR.

The "Paradis d'Amour" is a romance of the 13th century, of which Le Grand d'Aussy published a selected abridgement, and which Mr. Way translated with still greater deviations from the original. Le Grand gave only the first verse of the following song; but M. Roquefort has published the whole, from the MS. in the king's library, in his "Etat de la Poésie Françoise dans les XII^{e} & XIII^{e} siècles." It will be

best to introduce the song with Mr. Way's translation of the preceding context.

Hé! aloete,
Joliete,
Petit t'est de mes maus.

S' amour venist a plesir
Que me vousissent sesir
De la blondette,
Saverousette,
J'en feusse plus baus.
Hé! aloete,
Joliete,
Petit t'est de mes maus.

The livelong night, as was my wonted lot,
In tears had pass'd, nor yet day's orb was hot,
When forth I walk'd, my sorrows to beguile,
Where freshly smelling fields with dewdrops smile.

Already with his shrilling carol gay
The vaulting skylark hail'd the sun from far;
And with so sweet a music seem'd to play
My heart-strings round, as some propitious star
Had chased whate'er might fullest joyaunce mar:
Bath'd in delicious dews that morning bright,
Thus strove my voice to speak my soul's delight:—

Hark! hark!
Thou merry lark!
Reckless thou how I may pine;

Would but love my vows befriend,
To my warm embraces send
That sweet fair one,
Brightest, dear one,
Then my joy might equal thine.

Hark! hark!
Thou merry lark!
Reckless thou how I may pine;
Let love, tyrant, work his will,
Plunging me in anguish still:
Whatsoe'er
May be my care,
True shall bide this heart of mine.

Hark! hark!
Thou merry lark!
Reckless thou what griefs are mine;
Come, relieve my heart's distress,
Though in truth the pain is less,
That she frown,
Than if unknown
She for whom I ceaseless pine.
Hark! hark!
Thou merry lark!
Reckless thou how I may pine.

FRAIGNE.

THIS poet belongs to the 14th century:—See Laborde, from whom the following specimen is taken.

Et ou vas tu, petit soupir,
Que j'ai oui si doulcement?
T'en vas tu mettre a saquement
Quelque povre amoureux martir?
Vien-ca, dy moy tost, sans mentir,
Ce que tu as en pensement.
Et ou vas tu, petit soupir,
Que j'ai oui si doulcement?

Dieu te conduye a ton desir,
Et te ramene a sauvement;
Mais je te requiers humblement,
Que ne faces ame mourir.
Et ou vas tu, petit soupir,
Que j'ai oui si doulcement?

AND where then goest thou, gentle sigh,
Passing so softly by?
Goest thou to carry misery
To some poor wretched lover?
Come, tell me all without deceit,
Thy secret aim discover;
And whither goest thou, gentle sigh,
Passing so softly by?

Now Heaven conduct thee safely on,
According to thy will;
One boon alone I ask of thee,
Wound—but forbear to *kill.*
And where then goest thou, gentle sigh,
Passing so softly by?

CHRISTINE DE PISAN.

It may be said that both this lady, and Charles duke of Orleans, who is noticed next, belong to a period rather later than the one which this volume purports to illustrate. Some license will, however, be taken on this occasion; and it is assumed with the less ceremony, because the works of neither of these poets have ever been printed, we believe, except in a few extracts, (such as those contained in the second volume of "Les Poètes François depuis le XII^{e} siècle jusqu'à Malherbe,") and because we should otherwise *wholly* fail in what we promised (p. 81), under the expectation of much more extensive MS. research in this department. Our selections from Christine de Pisan are taken from a very fine richly illuminated

folio MS. in the British Museum [Harl. 4431], which well deserves notice.

Christine was an Italian by birth, and followed her father at the age of five years, in 1368, to the court of Charles V., where she afterwards married, at an early period of her life, Chastel, the king's historiographer, by whom she was left in poverty, a widow with three children, when only twenty-five. She sought her consolation in literary pursuits, and became celebrated for the variety and beauty of her compositions. France has not done justice to this amiable woman, whose works possess a degree of merit far above the age in which she lived.

The collection contains a hundred ballads, in the last of which she says of herself—

Cent ballades j'ay cy escriptes,
Tres toutes de mon sentiment,
Et suis de mes promesses quittes
A qui m'en pria chierement;
Nommee m'y suis proprement;
Qui le vouldra scavoir ou non,
En la centiesme appertement
En escrit y ay mis mon nom.....

Ne les ay faits pour meriter
Avoir, ne aucun payement.
Mes en mes pensees eslites
Les ay; et bien petitement
Souffisoit mon entendement,
Les faire dignes de renom.
Non pourtant dernierement
En escrit y ay mis mon nom.

The piece that reflects most honour on the character of this lady is her address of moral advice to her son; who, it is said, was brought over by the earl of Salisbury, under Richard II., to be educated with his own son in England, whither Christine herself was afterwards ineffectually invited by Henry IV. We shall select a few stanzas.

Fils, je n'ai mie grand tresor
Pour t'enrichir—mais, au lieu d'or,
Aucuns enseignemens montrer
Te veuil, si les veuilles noter.

Ayme Dieu de toute ta force,
Crains le, et de servir t'efforces;
Là sont, se bien les as apprins,
Les dix commandemens comprins.....

Se tu viens en prosperité
A grant cheuance et herité,
Gardes qu'orgueil ne te sourmonte,
Pense qu'à Dieu fault rendre compte.....

Tiens ta promesse et tres peu jure,
Gardes que sois trouvé parjure;
Car le menteur est mescreu,
Et quand vrai il dit, il n'est creu.

Si tu veulx vivre à court en paix,
Voy et escoutes, e si te tais;
Ne te corrouces de legier,
Ja que dangereux ne soit ton mangier.....

Tiens tes filles trop mieux vestues,
Que bien aornees soient veues;
Fais les apprendre bel maintien,
Jamais oyseuses ne les tien.

Se tu scays que l'on te diffame,
Sans cause, e que tu ayes blasme,
Ne t'en courrouc's—fay toujours bien
Car droit vaincra, je te dys bien.....

Ne laisse pas que Dieu servir,
Pour au monde trop asservir ;
Car biens mondains vont à defin,
Et l'ame durera sans fin.

Christine is also the author of several prose pieces ; and she was engaged at her death in writing the life of Charles V., at the request of Philip duke of Burgundy. Further particulars of her history may be found in the Mem. de l'Acad. II. 762 ; in the collection of French poets above referred to ; and in Walpole's Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors. Her moral proverbs were translated into English by that Earl Rivers, who, previous to the accession of Richard III., "lay shorter by the head at Pomfret."

Ce moys de May tout se rejoye,
Ce me semble, fors my lassette,
Qui n'ay pas cil qu'avoir souloie
Dont je souspire a voix bassette :
C'etoit ma belle amour doulcette,
Qui ores est si loings de my :
Helas! reviens tost mon amy !

En ce doulx mois ou tout verdoye,
Ci yrons jouer sous l'erbette,
Ou ourons chanter a grant joye
Rossignols et maint allouette ;

Tu scez bien ou—a voix simplette
Encor te pry, disant, ay my!
Helas! reviens tost mon amy!

This month of May hath joys for all,
Save me alone; such fate is mine:
Him, once so near to me, I mourn,
And sigh, and plaintively repine.
He was a gentle, noble love,
Whom thus the adverse fates remove:—
O soon return, my love!

In this fair month, when all things bloom,
Come to the green mead, come away!
Where joyous ply the merry larks
And nightingales their minstrelsy;
Thou know'st the spot:—with plaintive strain
Again I sigh, I cry again,
O soon return, my love!

Le plus bel des fleurs de liz,
Et celui que mieulx on prise,
A mon gre, en toute guise,
Est cil que sur tous j'esliz:
Car il est jeune et joliz
Doulx, courtoiz, de haulte prise
Le plus bel des fleurs de liz.

Et pour ce je m'embeliz
En s'amour dont suis esprise;
Si ne doy estre reprize
Se ay choisy pour tous deliz
Le plus bel des fleurs de liz.

THE choicest of the fleurs de lis,
In praise of whom all tongues agree,—
He is the one, in every way,
My heart and ev'ry heart to sway.
He is the youngest, noblest, fairest,
Most courteous, mild, the best, the dearest,
The choicest of the fleurs de lis.

Therefore it is my spirit's pride
To love *him*, loved by all beside:
And can I coldly be reproved,
Thus choosing one so warmly loved,
The choicest of the fleurs de lis?

Orsus! orsus! pensez de bien amer,
Vrays amoureux, et joye maintenir,
Ce mois de May, et vuidez tout amer
De voz doulx cuers, ne lui veulles tenir;
Soies joyeux et liez, sans retenir
Nul fel penser; car rejouir se doit
Tout vray amant par plaisant souvenir,
Amours le veult, et la saison le doit.

Or vous veuilles es doulx biens affermer,
Qui a tous bons doivent appartenir;
Rire, jouer, chanter, nul ne blamer,
Et tristece toute de vous banir;
Vestir de vert pour joye parfournir,
A feste aler se dame le mandoit,
Vous tenir liez quoy quel doye avenir;
Amours le veult, et la saison le doit.

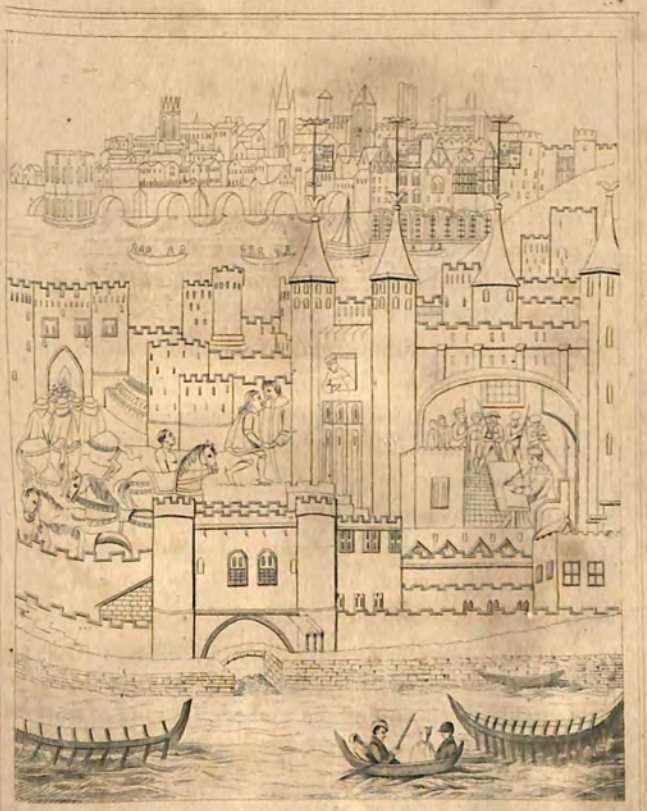
Arise, ye true lovers, arise! Of your love
Think only, and let the glad spirits be gay:
This bright month of May, from your bosoms remove
Ev'ry care-bringing thought, nor permit it to stay.
Be joyful, be faithful; never allowing
One bitter remembrance the joys to outweigh
Of those sweet recollections the season's bestowing;
'Tis the mandate of love, and the claim of the May.

Then look to yourselves, those glad pleasures enjoying
In the hearts of the good that may blamelessly stay;
To smile, and to sport, and to sing, none denying,
While grief takes his flight from your spirits today;
Array'd in the green festive robe of the season,
At the feast quick and ready the fair to obey,
Each true to his vows, never dreaming of treason;
'Tis the mandate of love, and the call of the May.

CHARLES DUKE OF ORLEANS.

CHARLES was taken prisoner at the battle of Agincourt in 1415. His poetry appears to have been principally written during his stay in England, and is contained in a large and splendid folio MS. in the British Museum [King's MSS. 16. F. II.]. The illuminations are curious, particularly one which contains a view of the Tower of London. It represents the reception and dismission of a messenger by the duke, and immediately precedes a short poem, in which he writes to his correspondent ("mon frère et mon compagnon"), that he was promised liberty to go to France if he could find security for his return; and desires an application to be made to the duke of Burgundy. A few of the songs are in English; and though they show considerable proficiency in a foreign language, they are no very favourable specimens of the author's capacity of employing it for poetic composition.

N' est elle de tous biens garnie,
Celle que j' ayme loyaument?
Il m' est avis, par mon serment,
Que sa pareille n' a en vie;



CHARLES DUC D'ORLEANS.

London, Published by Longman & Co. May 1825.

Qu'en dites je vous prie?
Que vous en semble vraiement?
N'est elle de tous biens garnie,
Celle que j'ayme loyaument?

Soit qu'elle danse, cante ou rie,
Ou face quelque esbatement,
Faictes en loyal jugement,
Sans faveur et sans flatterie,
N'est elle de tous biens garnie,
Celle que j'ayme loyaument?

Is she not lavishly endow'd,
She whom I love so loyally?
It is my very faith in troth
That one so fair can never be;
And say'st thou not the same with me?
Tell me, in simple verity,
Is she not lavishly endow'd,
She whom I love so loyally?

Whether she dance, or sing, or smile,
Or whate'er else may do or be,
Give me a voice impartial, free
From favour or from flattery;
Is she not lavishly endow'd,
She whom I love so loyally?

Bien monstrez, printemps gracieux,
De quel mestier savez servir;.
Car yver fait cuers ennuyeux,
Et vous les faictes rejouir;
Si tost come il vous voit venir,
Luy et sa meschant retenue,
Sont contrains et prets de fuir,
A votre joyeuse venue.

Yver fait champs et arbres vieux
Leur barbes de niege blanchir;
Et est si fort et pluvieux
Qu'empres le feu convient mouvir;
On ne puet hors des huys yssir,
Come ung oyseau qui est en mue;
Mais vous faictes tout revenir,
A votre joyeuse venue.

Yver fait le soleil es cieulx
D'un mantel de nues couvrir,
Et maintenant, (loue soit Dieulx!)
Vous estes venu esclarsir
Toutes choses et embellir;
Yver a son paine perdue,
Car l'an nouvel la fait bannir,
A votre joyeuse venue.

Well thou showest, gracious spring,
What fair works thy hand can bring;
Winter makes all spirits weary,
Thine it is to make them merry:
At thy coming, instant he
And his spiteful followers flee,
Forced to quit their rule uncheering
At thy bright appearing.

Fields and trees will aged grow,
Winter-clad, with beards of snow,
And so rough, so rainy he,
We must to the fireside flee;
There, in dread of out-door weather,
Sculk, like moulting birds, together:
But *thou* com'st—all nature cheering
By thy bright appearing.

Winter yon bright sun enshrouds
With his mantle of dark clouds;
But, kind Heav'n be praised, once more
Bursts forth thine enlightening power,
Gladdening, brightening all the scene,
Proving how vain his work hath been,—
Flying at the influence cheering
Of thy bright appearing.

Mon seul amy! mon bien! ma joye!
Celui qui sur tous amer veulx,
Je vous pry que soyez joyeux
En esperant que brief vous voye;
Car je ne fais guere voye
Da vous venir se m'ayd Dieux,
Mon seul, &c.

Et se par souhaidier pouoye
Estre empres vous ung jour ou deux,

Pour quang il a dessous les cieulx
Autre niens ne souhaideroye ;
Mon seul, &c.

My only love! my joy! my pride!
More dear than all the world beside!
I pray thee now be blithe and gay,
Soon will I come without delay ;
Brief space shall pass ere I to thee
Will fly, so Heav'n be kind to me,—
My only love! my joy! my pride!
More dear than all the world beside!

And oh! if strong desire could place
Me by thy side but little space,
For all that is beneath the skies,
No boon so high my heart should prize,—
My only love! my joy! my pride!
More dear than all the world beside!

Allez vous en, allez, allez,
Soucy, soin, et melancolie ; &c.

Hence away, anxious folly!
Care, depart, and melancholy!
Think ye all my life to measure
Like the past, at your good pleasure?

That, at least, ye shall not do ;
Reason shall be lord o'er you :
Hence away, then, anxious folly !
Care, depart, and melancholy.

Should ye e'er return again
Hither with your gloomy train,
Cursed of the gods be ye,
And the hour ye come to me !
Hence away, anxious folly,
Care, and boding melancholy !

It is well known that Charles amused himself during his captivity by some attempts (rather awkward ones it is true) at his favourite rondeau in the English tongue. These curious pieces have been more than once published. The author of the "Memoirs of Jeanne d'Arc" (Lond. 1824) gives, as a specimen of the duke's poetic talent, what is in fact only a very indifferent Latin version (probably, however, by Charles himself) of one of the prettiest of his French rondeaus. Whether the author of these rambling, ill-arranged "Memoirs" was aware of this does not appear. It would seem scarcely probable that he should quote a lame Latin version, if he was acquainted

with and could have given his author's French; and yet one would suspect that he *was* so acquainted, when it is observed,—first, that the English translation which he has added contains thoughts which are in the French, but not in the Latin;—and secondly, that the mode in which the Latin text is printed, renders it doubtful whether that language be not beyond the author's sphere of comprehension.

The rondeau is as follows, as printed in the "Poëtes Français depuis le XII^e^. siècle jusqu'à Malherbes."

Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure, et de pluye,
Et s'est vestu de broderie,
De soleil luisant, clair et beau;
Il n'y a beste, ni oyseau
Qu'en son jargon ne chante ou crie,
"Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluye."

Riviere, fointaine et ruisseau
Portent en livrée jolie,
Gouttes d'argent d'orfavrerie:
Chascun s'habille de nouveau;
Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluye.

The season now hath cast away
Its garb of cold, and wind, and sleet,
And decks itself in broidery
Of sunshine bright and flow'rets sweet;

And bird and beast doth each essay
In its own fashion to repeat,—
"The season now hath cast away
Its garb of cold, and wind, and sleet."

Fountain, and brook, and rivulet,
In silver-spangled livery play,
Sparkling, their holiday to greet:
All things are clad in new array,
Because the season casts away
Its garb of cold, and wind, and sleet.

JEAN FROISSART.

THIS celebrated historian belongs to a considerably earlier period than the two last poets, having been born in 1337. He was the author of an immense quantity of ballads, lais, rondels, &c. now in MS. in the king's library at Paris.

Le corps s'en va, mais le cœur vous demeure;
Tres chere dame, adieu, jusqu'au retour, &c.

The body goes, the spirit stays;
Dear lady, till we meet, farewell!
Too far from thee my home must be:
The body goes, the soul delays;—
Dearest of ladies, fare thee well!

But sweeter thoughts that in me dwell
The anguish of my grief outweigh;—
Dearest of ladies, fare thee well!
The body goes, the soul may stay.

Reviens, amy; trop longue est ta demeure; &c.

Return, my love; too long thy stay;
Sorrow for thee my soul has stung;
My spirit calls thee ev'ry day,—
Return my love, thou stay'st too long.

For nothing, wanting thee, consoles,
Or *can* console, till thou art nigh:
Return my love, thou stay'st too long,
And grief is mine till thou be by.

CHANSONS NORMANDS.

At the close of M. Dubois's volume of "Vaux-de-Vire et Chansons Normands" (Caen, 1821), there are several songs which he ascribes to the age of Olivier Basselin, i. e. to the latter half of the 14th century. Some doubt has been expressed of the authenticity of these songs, which he states were printed from a MS. of the 15th century; but the Harleian MSS. No. 5242, and the king's MSS. 20. A. XVI., contain several of them with slight variations; and there seems little reason to doubt that they are genuine pieces of popular currency. One specimen must suffice.

L'amour de moy sy est enclos
Dedanc ung joly jardinet,
Ou croist la rose et le muguet,
Et aussy faict la passerose.

The lady of my love resides
Within a garden's bound;
There springs the rose, the lily there
And hollyhock are found.

My garden is a beauteous spot,
Garnish'd with blossoms gay;
There a true lover guards her well,
By night as well as day.

Alas! no sweeter thing can be,
Than that sweet nightingale;
Joyous he sings at morning hour,
Till, tired, his numbers fail.

But late I saw my lady cull
The violets on the green:
How lovely did she look! methought,
What beauty there was seen!

An instant on her form I gazed,
So delicately white;
Mild as the tender lamb was she,
And as the red rose bright.

THE MASTERSINGERS.

Nu ist der seite enzwei.

ante, p. 134.

D' autra guiza e d' aûtra razo
M' aven a chantar que no sol.

ARNAUD DANIEL.

DER SCHUOLMEISTER VON ESSELINGEN.

London, Published by Longman & Co. May 1825.

THE MASTERSINGERS.

Decline of German poetry from the beginning of the 14th century.—The Mastersingers.—Sing-schools.—The last of the Minnesingers. — Der Chanzler. — Regenbog. — Frauenlob, and his funeral.—The battle of Wartburg.—System and peculiarities of the Mastersingers.—Hans Sachs.—Anonymous ballads and popular songs.—Specimens of the latter.

THE accession of the house of Hapsburg has already been pointed out as the æra of the decline of German poetry. No branch of European vernacular literature gave so rich a promise,—none seemed more capable of being matured into finished excellence; yet no hopes were so speedily and completely blasted. The causes of the degradation of the German muse to such an extent are not easily discovered. Why, it has often been asked, did it take so unfavourable a turn, as compared with that of many other countries? why did so much beauty and harmony of language, so much tenderness and comparative refinement of taste and feeling, fail in producing their legitimate effects? and why did they quietly give place to a cold, artificial, handicraft system of riming by line, square, and compass? Princes and nobles had, it is true, ceased to sing; and humbler

minstrels had taken up the neglected 'geige;' but why was the muse purely aristocratic? and why should she refuse her inspiration, as the court did its honours, to all but the nobility that proves its title by a due pedigree of heraldic quarterings?

Whatever cause we may choose to assign to the phenomenon, certain it is that we must historically record a vast and almost cheerless blank, which extends from the age of the Minnesingers almost to the 18th century, chequered with only few and rare alleviating exceptions. The characteristic of the Troubadour age was *form* and *rule* in every thing, supported by an excited tone of feeling in society, and the caprice of the aristocracy. The protecting principle was removed, and there ensued a disrespect of the art which such patronage had forced beyond its natural level. The vernacular tongues, too, for two or three centuries rather retrograded than advanced on the progress they had so rapidly made at their first cultivation; and they were not even assisted, but perhaps retarded, by the increased taste for literary pursuits, inasmuch as that taste was chiefly directed towards classical objects. But the relics which are sprinkled over the mass of desolation,—and particularly the beautiful ballads and popular songs of this period, which more or less belong to every country in Europe, —show that the feelings which an artificial state of society had prematurely excited, and afterwards left to

languish, were still in existence, and were only waiting the more mature culture of progressive civilization.

The Minnesingers are usually considered as definitively separated both in time and character from the Mastersingers, a class of minstrels who about the beginning of the 14th century formed themselves, in the towns of Germany, into guilds or trading companies, and agreed to be bound by certain fanciful and arbitrary laws of rhythm. Learned controversies still agitate the antiquarian polemics of Germany, as to the proper line of demarcation between these schools. The difficulty on this head would incline us to think it more probable that they blend imperceptibly,—that one formed itself by degrees, and from the operation of various political and social causes, during the decline of the other. Even during the 14th century, long after the dominion of the Mastersingers had established itself, we have decisive evidence in the Limpurg Chronicle [see Bouterwek I. 292], that many minstrels chose rather to pursue the more independent and natural course of the Minnesingers. Unfortunately, the Chronicle has given little more than initiatory extracts. On the other hand, persons to whom, as adepts in the poetic art, the name of Masters was attributed, seem to have existed even in the best age of the Minnesingers; and it is probable that the title was only more universally and distinctively bestowed when the spirit of pedantry had be-

come prevalent, and when the 'song-schools' or 'guilds' became in Germany what the 'consistorios' and 'academies' were in other countries during the same decay of the art.

The results of such institutions in accelerating the progress of that decline which they pretend to obviate, but of which they are at once the symptom and disposing cause, may be traced historically in many other countries. Mr. Bowring in his 'Batavian Anthology' notices the same issue of the attempts made in Holland to force the growth of its native literature. "It is a singular fact," says he, "that the means which were employed in the 14th century for the advancement of the language and its literature became in the highest degree instrumental to its degradation. We allude to the foundation of the Chambers of Rhetoric, which took place towards the end of this æra. The degeneracy of the language may mainly be attributed to the wandering orators (sprekers), who, being called to the courts of princes, or admitted though uninvited, rehearsed, for money, the miserable doggrel produced by themselves or others. These people afterwards formed themselves, in Flanders and Brabant, into literary societies, which were known by the name of Chambers of Rhetoricians (Kamers der Rhetorijkers or Rederijkers), and which offered prizes to the most meritorious poets. The first Chambers appear to have been founded at Dixmuiden and Ant-

werp: at the former place in 1394, and at the latter in 1400. These societies were formed in imitation of the French, who began to institute them about the middle of the 14th century, under the name of Collèges de Rhetorique. The example of Flanders was speedily followed by Zealand and Holland. In 1430 there was a Chamber at Middelburg; in 1433, at Vlaardingen; in 1434, at Nieuwkerk; and in 1437, at Gouda. Even insignificant Dutch villages had their Chambers. Among others, one was founded in the Lier in the year 1480. In the remaining provinces they met with less encouragement. They existed, however, at Utrecht, Amersfoort, Leeuwaarden, and Hasselt. The purity of the language was completely undermined by the riming self-called Rhetoricians, and their abandoned courses brought poetry itself into disrepute. All distinction of genders was nearly abandoned; the original abundance of words ran waste; and that which was left, became completely overwhelmed by a torrent of barbarous terms."

The change in the character of the German poets and in the quality of their verses, so far as we can judge from what has survived, was gradual. Among the latest, and not the meanest, ornaments of the proper Suabian school, we find many whose history and indeed whose very names mark the adoption of the art by men of a lower class of life. Instead of princes, nobles and knights, we have clerks, school-

masters, and even mechanics*. The Chancellor (Der Chanzler), who has left some pieces of very considerable merit, has already been noticed as having in his origin been a fisherman of Steiermark, whose talents, perhaps, raised him to some office under Rodolph of Hapsburg. Regenbog, a name of much note, and one of "the twelve old-masters," was a smith at Mentz, as he himself declares, in stanzas which often lament his having left an honest mode of earning an independent livelihood for what the spirit of the age began to render an unprofitable calling. One of his songs, in the Colmar MS. and printed by Hagen and Docen in their Museum, II. 187, is not undeserving of note, from the similarity in its character to the modern tale of "The Three Warnings."—Death pays a premature and unwelcome visit to the poet in the days of his youth, and receives a remonstrance at the unreasonableness of the call. After a parley, his entreaties are heard: "Farewell! and live," says Death; "but be ready when I send my messengers to give thee thy warnings." The time comes—the

* Even the heraldry adapts itself to the change; and in the Manesse MS. we find Regenbog with hammer and tongs for the device on his shield; and, instead of the pomp of the tournament, the "schoolmaster," in the illumination which we have engraved, appears armed with the humbler honours of the rod.

messengers, in the form of the various bodily infirmities of old age, have arrived. "Who bids them speed, that they so fast arrive?" says the poet. Death answers the question by arriving in their train, and awakening his recollection to the import of the messages they convey. "Thus gently closed the strife," concludes the song, in an address of supplication to the Virgin, to receive the wearied and resigned traveller into his place of final repose.

At Mentz, which afterwards became the high-place of the 'song-schools,' Regenbog had an active rival in Henry of Meissen, a doctor of theology, and a canon of the cathedral there, more commonly known by the name of Frauenlob, or Praise-the-ladies; which he acquired, probably, from his zealous services in the support of the honour of the sex. "We know not," observes the Edinburgh Reviewer (vol. xxvi. p. 200), "what rewards their gratitude bestowed in his lifetime, but they gave an extraordinary demonstration of it at his funeral." —"On the eve of St. Andrew, in the year 1318," we read in the old chronicle of Albert of Strasburg, "Henry, surnamed Frauenlob, was buried at Mentz, in the parvis of the great church, near unto the stairs, with marvellous solemnity:—his corpse was carried by ladies from his dwelling-house unto the place of burial; and loudly did they mourn and bewail his death, on account of the infinite praises which he had

bestowed on womankind in his poetry." The chronicle adds, that "so much good wine was poured into the grave, that it overflowed with the libations." Well might the good ladies of Mentz lament for the loss of the last of the minstrels who had so long toiled in their service! Almost prophetically did they crowd around the tomb where the spirit of German poetry was for centuries to make its bed of repose!

The 'Masters' were always anxious to clothe themselves with the ancient glory of the Minnesingers. They were fond of tracing up the origin of their school to a very remote antiquity; and the most celebrated names were placed, by all sorts of anachronisms, among the supposed united band of ancient founders. Nothing suited their purpose better than the poetic battle or tournament of Wartburg, which has been before alluded to as a supposed contest or 'tenson' at the court of the landgrave of Thuringia, though in reality it is very probably the composition, in that form, of one poet. To this event, real or imaginary, the Masters looked with great veneration, as a proof of the systematic cultivation of the art among the earliest worthies of the Suabian age; in short, as an undoubted type and precedent of a 'song-school.' They went even so far as to dress up this pseudo-historical tradition with supernatural details; and these dreams are no small proofs of degeneracy in the taste and spirit of the age.

According to the legend (which, with the authorities, will be found in Grimm's Deutsche Sagen II. 342), Henry the virtuous clerk, Walter Vogelweide, Reinmar the Second, Wolfram of Eschenbach, Biterolf, and Henry of Ofterdingen, having engaged in a poetic contest at the court of the landgrave of Thuringia, it was by common consent arranged, that the hangman should do his office upon him who came off the worst. Henry of Ofterdingen excelled all; and his jealous rivals conspired to reverse the bargain, and commend him to the good offices of this new patron of the Muses. Henry fled for protection to the landgravine Sophia, and negotiated a truce for a year, promising to set out in search of Klingesor of Hungary, a Minnesinger, whom the story transforms into one of wizard power, and who is to take upon himself to decide their differences. Henry wandered forth, betook himself to the duke of Austria, and thence to Klingesor, who praised his singing, and promised to accompany him. The two poets passed their time, however, so pleasantly, that the eve of the day arrived on which the truce was to close, while as yet they had not set out on the journey. Klingesor gave his guest a sleeping-draught, set him by his side in a leather trunk, and commanded his attendant spirits to transport them to Wartburg. In the morning, the well-known bells sounded in Henry's ears; and on rising he was

astonished to see himself on the field of action. The two strangers astounded the court by the news of their rapid change of place. Klingesor created still more surprise by reading in the stars of evening the news of the queen of Hungary being then delivered of a daughter, who should be beautiful, holy and virtuous, and in due time marry the landgrave's son.

At length the singers were summoned to the public hall; and Klingesor began by a trial of skill with Wolfram of Eschenbach. The battle was carried on without any decisive superiority to either party; and Klingesor contrived at last to substitute one of the spirits at his command to carry on the war in his place. Him, however, Wolfram of Eschenbach quickly dispatched, by turning his song to the consideration of the mystery of the holy sacraments. Again one of these imps was commissioned by night to try his skill; and in the result, though Wolfram was the most learned in divinity, the devil beat him in astronomy, and recorded his disgrace by stamping him, in deep characters on the solid wall, a schnipfen-schnapf, which we may properly translate, a snipper-snapper. Klingesor at last departed as and whence he came, loaded with presents;—and so ends the fable.

The history and characteristics of this most curious school of poetry have been so properly drawn, and the critical researches of the German antiquarians have been so well condensed in the Edinburgh Review

(vol. xxvi. p. 202), that the reader will probably be best pleased by the mere transcript of what relates to this branch of our subject.

"From the time of Frauenlob and Regenbog, the cultivation of German poetry devolved almost exclusively upon the 'Mastersingers' in the great towns, to whom we have already alluded. Poetry certainly never had so singular a fortune in any other country. It actually became one of the incorporated trades in all cities; and the burghers obtained the freedom of it as of any other corporation. Of many of these humble bards, we know very little more than their names, which, in truth, are not particularly prepossessing:—Zwinger and Wurgendrussel, Buchenlin, Amker and Hell-fire, Old Stoll and Young Stoll, Strong Bopp, Dang Brotscheim, Batt Spiegel, Peter Pfort, and Martin Gumpel. The period when these guilds or schools of verse first received their statutes and regulations is involved in great uncertainty. On this head the German antiquaries are divided in opinion. By M. Grimm, the Minnesingers and the Mastersingers are supposed to have originally formed but one class of poets; and one of the works noticed at the head of this article, maintains this theory against the objections of Docen, who has taken the opposite side of the question. At all events, these societies offer a most singular phenomenon. Composed entirely of the lower ranks of society, of hard-working trades-

men and artificers, they obtained a monopoly of verse-craft, and extended their tuneful fraternities over the greater part of the Empire. Wherever the 'hoch deutsch' was spoken, there the Mastersingers founded a colony; and they were even found in Bohemia, where the German was more familiar to the mixed population of the towns, than the Sclavonian language.

"The vulgar, all over the world, delight to indulge themselves with glitter, and parade, and external distinction; and it is amusing to observe how easily the lower orders can contrive to gratify the cravings which they feel in common with greater folks. The law will have it, that the king is the sole fountain of honour; but those who are too diminutive and feeble to toil up to the pinnacle of the rock, and lave themselves in the streams of royal favour, find means to slake their thirst quite as effectually from humbler sources. A lodge of odd fellows will marshall a funeral with as many staves and banners as could be furnished by the Lord Lion King at Arms, and all his heralds and pursuivants to boot, from Albany to Dingwall. The petty huckster of the country town has no order dangling from his button-hole, and can never hope to figure in the installation: but his veins swell with quite as much dignity when he stalks in the procession with his pinchbeck badge and embroidered apron, the grand officer of the lodge of freemasons, gazed on and admired by all the slip-

shod wenches and ragged urchins of the parish. The workings of this insatiate propensity may be distinctly traced in the pride and solemnity of the schools of verse of the Mastersingers. The candidate was introduced with great form into the assembly. The four 'merkers,' or examiners, sat behind a silken curtain, to pass judgment on his qualifications. One of these had Martin Luther's translation of the Bible before him, it being considered as the standard of the language. His province was to decide whether the diction of the novice was pure, and his grammar accurate. The others attended to the rime and metre of the composition, and the melody to which it was sung. And if they united in declaring that the candidate had complied with the statutes and regulations, he was decorated with a silver chain and badge,—the latter representing good King David playing on the harp; and he was honourably admitted into the society.

"The metrical system of the Mastersingers was peculiar to themselves. Their technical terms cannot be well translated; we shall therefore add the few which we shall notice in the original. Our mineralogical friends are so well content to crackle, and whizz, and thump, through many an Anglo-Wernerian page of quartz, gneiss, trapp, schorl, blue whack, and grey whack, that we humbly hope and trust that, for once, the nomenclature of this marketable poesy may also be allowed to pass muster. The poems of the

Mastersingers were always lyrical, and actually sung to music. The entire poem was called a 'bar;' and it was divided generally into three, but sometimes into five or more stanzas, or 'gesetze:' and each 'satz' also fell into three portions; the first of which was a 'stole,' the second an 'abgesang,' and the third a 'stole,' like the first. The rimes were classed into 'stumpfe-reime' and 'klingende-reime;' and 'stumpfe-schlage-reime' and 'klingende-schlage-reime' and other denominations were employed, which we shall spare ourselves the trouble of transcribing. The poets, singers and merkers counted the syllables on their fingers; and if there was a proper number of syllables in the line, it was of no consequence whether they were long or short. The length of the verse, the number of lines, and the order of the rimes in each 'stole' and 'abgesang,' was variable, and consequently their poems were susceptible of a great variety of forms, which were called tunes or 'weise.' The invention of a new 'weise' was considered as the test of a Mastersinger's abilities. There were some hundreds of these 'weise,' all named after their inventors; as, Hans Tindeisen's rosemary weise; Joseph Schmierer's flowery-paradise weise; Hans Fogel's fresh weise; and Henry Frauenlob's yellow weise, and his blue weise, and his frog weise, and his looking-glass weise. The code of criticism to which the Master-

singers were subjected, was contained in the rules of 'Tabulatur' of the societies; and it certainly was unreasonably severe. They were actually prohibited from employing 'sentences which nobody could understand,' or 'words wherein no meaning could be discovered;' which unfeeling interdictions are found in the 4th and 5th articles of the Nuremberg Tabulatur.

"The Mastersingers amused themselves by ascribing an extravagant antiquity to their institutions, although their statutes and regulations do not appear to have been completely established till the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. Master Cyril Sprangenburg, indeed, deduced their history from 'the Celtic bards in the time of Abraham;' and this elaborate disquisition gave such satisfaction to the society, that it was transcribed in vellum, and 'bound with gold bosses, clasps and corners,' and preserved amongst their archives with as much veneration as the Florentine copy of the Pandects. The charter of incorporation of the 'Twelve Wise Masters,' was said to have been granted by the Emperor Otto and Pope Leo the Fourth. To show the absurdity of the fable, it will be sufficient to observe, that Conrad of Würtzburg, and Frauenlob, and others of yet later date, are said to have been cited by that emperor, in the year 962, to appear before him at Pavia, where, as Adam Puschman gravely records, they sung before the

professors of the University, and were declared to be the masters and founders of the art.

" The city of Nuremberg was the Athens of these incorporated poets. To the credit of Hans Foltz, the barber and Mastersinger, who shaved there in the middle of the 15th century, it must be told, that he took great interest in promoting the then newly discovered art of printing; and even set up a private press at his own house. But none of the Mastersingers can vie with the industrious Hans Sachs the shoemaker. Hans was born at Nuremberg in the year 1494; and his father, an honest tailor, placed him, at an early age, in the free-school of the town, where, as he mentions in one of his poems, 'he was indifferently taught,' according to the bad system which was followed in those days.' However, he 'picked up a few scraps of Greek and Latin.' In his fifteenth year he learnt shoemaking; and about the same time, one Nunnenbeck, a weaver and Mastersinger, instructed him in the rudiments of the 'meister gesang.' According to an old German custom, it was usual for young workmen to travel round the country for some years before they settled in their trade. Hans confesses, that his conduct during his rambles was not altogether exemplary, but he lost no opportunity of improving himself in the 'praiseworthy art;' and in his twentieth year he composed his first 'bar,' a godly song, to the tune of 'Long Marner;'

and was admitted to share in the honours to which he had so long aspired. Hans was partial to narrative poetry; but he gained most renown by his plays and farces, some of which extend to seven acts, and which afforded wonderful amusement to the patient Nuremberghers. In the seventy-seventh year of his age, he took an inventory of his poetical stock in trade, and found, according to his narrative, that his works 'filled thirty folio volumes, all written with his own hand,' and consisted of 'four thousand two hundred mastership songs; two hundred and eight comedies, tragedies and farces; one thousand seven hundred fables, tales and miscellaneous poems; and seventy-three devotional, military, and love songs; making a sum total of six thousand and forty-eight pieces, great and small.' Out of these he culled as many as filled three massy folios, which were published in the years 1558—61. And another edition being called for, Hans could not resist the temptation of increasing it from his manuscripts. During the whole of his life he continued to work at his trade, although he found leisure enough to spin out a greater mass of rime than was ever produced by one man, if Lope de Vega be excepted. Hans had the satisfaction to find that his 'collected works' were received as a welcome gift by the public; and in the year 1576 he died, full of years and honour. The fame of this indefatigable writer has lately revived in

Germany; and reprints have been made of his works, or at least of a part of them. The humour of his fabliaux, or 'schwänke,' certainly is not contemptible. He laughs lustily, and makes his reader join him: his manner, as far as verse can be compared to prose, is not unlike that of Rabelais, but less grotesque."

Opitz, in the commencement of the 17th century, first opened the modern school of German poetry. Till then, and even for some time after, formal pedantic dullness was everywhere triumphant, except in the humble but truly poetic feelings of the simple ballads and popular songs. Of these, traditionary attachment has preserved many, without sending down with them the names of their authors, who probably never sought nor were conscious of deserving posthumous honours, though the preservation and transmission of their works are evidence of the concurrent opinion of succeeding generations in favour of their claim to popular regard.

The German ballads in particular are second to those of no country in Europe: they do not come within our limits, but it may not be uninteresting to wind up our task with specimens of a few of the little lyric pieces which, though preserved without date or name, are not unworthy of the best spirit of the Suabian age.

The first is from Eschenburg's Denkmäler, p. 456.

Frau nachtigal, mach dich bereit,
Der tag bricht an, es ist hoch zeit;
Du sollst mein treuer bote seyn,
Wohl zu der allerliebsten mein.*

Sweet nightingale, thyself prepare,
The morning breaks, and thou must be
My faithful messenger to her,
My best beloved, who waits for thee.

She in her garden for thee stays,
And many an anxious thought will spring,
And many a sigh her breast will raise,
Till thou good tidings from me bring.

So speed thee up, nor longer stay;
Go forth with gay and frolic song:
Bear to her heart my greetings,—say
That I myself will come ere long.

And she will greet thee many a time,
"Welcome, dear nightingale!" will say;
And she will ope her heart to thee,
And all its wounds of love display.

---

* Πταίνῃ μοι κώνωψ ταχὺς ἄγγελος, ὅσσι δ' ἄκρους
Ζηνοφίλας ψαύσας προσψιθύριζε τάδε.
"Ἀγρυπνος μίμνει σε· σὺ δ' ὦ λήθαργε φιλόντων
"Ευδεις· ἴσα, πίτυ· ναὶ φιλόμουσε, πίτυ·
"Ησυχα δὴ φθίγξαι, μὴ καί, σύγκοιτον ἐγείρας
Κινήσῃς ἐκ' ἰμοὶ ζηλοτύπους ὀδύνας.
"Ην δ' ἀγάγῃς τὴν παῖδα, δορᾷ σίψω σε λέοντος
Κώνωψ, καὶ δώσω χειρὶ φέρειν ῥόπαλον.—Meleager.

Sore pierced by love's shafts is she,
Thou then the more her grief assail;
Bid her from every care be free:
Quick! haste away, my nightingale!

The following is from the collection of German popular ballads and songs called 'Wunderhorn.' See also Herder's Volkslieder, I. 67.

Wenn ich ein vöglein wär,
Und auch zwei flüglein hätt,
Flög ich zu dir;
Weils aber nicht kan seyn
Bleib ich allhier.

If I a small bird were,
And little wings might bear,
I'd fly to thee:
But vain those wishes are;
Here then my rest shall be.

When far from thee I bide,
In dreams still at thy side
I've talk'd with thee;
And when I woke, I sigh'd,
Myself alone to see.

No hour of wakeful night
But teems of thoughts of light—
Sweet thoughts of thee,—
As when in hours more bright,
Thou gav'st thy heart to me.*

The following song is in Wunderhorn, I. 93, and, at greater length, in Büsching and Hagen's Volkslieder, 203.

Nachtigal, ich hör dich singen,
Das herz möcht mir im leib zerspringen;
Komme doch und sag mir bald,
Wie ich mich verhalten soll.

Nachtigal, ich seh dich laufen,
An dem bächlein thust du saufen,
Du tunkst dein klein schnäblein ein,
Weinst is wär der beste wein.

Nachtigal, wo ist gut wohnen,
Auf den linden, in den kronen,
Bei der schön frau nachtigal,
Grüss mein schätschen tausendmal.

---

* Soven m'aven la nueg, quan sui colgatz
Qu'ieu sui ab vos per semblan en durmen;
Adoncs estauc en tan ric jauzimen,
Qu'ieu non volgra ja esser rissidatz,
Tan cum dures aquel plazenz pensatz;
E quan m'esvelh, cug murir deziran,
Per qu'ieu volgra aissi dormir tot l'an.

ARNAUD DE MARVEIL.

Sweet nightingale! I hear thee sing,—
Thy music makes my heart upspring;
O quickly come, sweet bird, to me,
And teach me to rejoice like thee.

Sweet nightingale! to the cool wave
I see thee haste, thy limbs to lave,
And quaff it with thy little bill,
As 'twere the daintiest beverage still.

Sweet bird! where'er thy dwelling be
Upon the linden's lofty tree
Beside thy beauteous partner, there
O greet a thousand times my fair!

Our last specimen is from Eschenburg's Denkmäler, p. 455.

Nächten, da ich bey ihr was,
Schwatzten wir dann diess, dann das,
Auch sehr freundlich zu mir sass,
Sagt', sie liebt' mich ohn' all maass. &c.

Last evening by my fair I sat,
And now on this we talk'd—now that;
Freely she sat by me, and said
She loved with love unlimited.

Last evening, when from her I parted,
In dearest friendship, faithful-hearted,
Her sacred vow she plighted me,
In joy or sorrow, mine to be.

Last eve, at leaving her, she clung
Close to my side, and on me hung;
And far along she went with me,
And oh! how kind and dear was she!

Today, when to her side I came,
How cool, how alter'd that proud dame!
All was reversed;—and back I turn'd,
By her, who was my true love, spurn'd.

THE END.

CONTENTS.

PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

page

SECT. I.—Introductory remarks. PROVENCE.—Imperfect knowledge of the works of the Troubadours.—Writers on the subject.—M. Raynouard.—Early monuments of Provençal poetry.—Its cultivation.—Decline of the art in the South.—Ascendancy of the North-French dialect or Romance.—Character of the Troubadours to be sought in their works.—Remarks on the question, whether the Troubadours confined themselves to lyric poetry, or like the Northern poets also composed Romances and Tales.—Remains of Provençal Romances and Tales.—Real extent of the literary productions of the Troubadours now uncertain . . . . . .

SECT. II.—CATALONIA.—Connexion between the courts of Barcelona and Provence.—Catalan language.—Remains of its poetry.—Ascendancy of the Castilian tongue.—Mosen Jordi de Sant Jordi.—Mosen Jayme Febrer.—Jayme Roig.—Ausias March. CASTILLE.—Supposed Hispano-Arabic origin of Troubadour poetry controverted.—The different classes of early Castilian poetry.—The Spanish Trobadors.—Alexandro Magno . . . 27

page

SECT. III.—ITALY.—Comparatively late application of its language to poetic purposes.—Use of other tongues.—Early Italian poets.—Sicilian school.—Tuscan school.—Character of early Italian poetry.—Petrarch. NORTHERN FRANCE.—Formation of the Northern Romance.—Intercourse between North and South France.—First attempts at poetry in the former.—Patronage of the Anglo-Norman court.—Lais and Fabliaux.—Lyric poetry.—Pastorals.—Comparative merits of the Northern and Southern tongues 50

SECT. IV.—GERMANY.—Songs of the ancient Teutonic tribes.—Reign of Charlemagne.—Formation of the Teutonic languages.—Remains of the Carlovingian age.—Fragment of Hildibrant and Hathubrant.—The Church.—Louis le Debonnaire.—Otfried.—Song of Victory of Louis III.—Legend of St. George.—St. Anno.—Popular songs.—Suabian dynasty.—Frederic Barbarossa.—His connexion with the Berengars.—Henry VI.—Frederic II.—Conrad IV.—Conradin.—Decline of German poetry.—Cultivation of poetry at the minor courts, and in various dialects.—Low German.—Landgrave of Thuringia.—Romances of the Suabian age.—Nibelungen Lied.—Laurin.—Scandinavian mythology and poetry.—Harald the Valiant.—Lyric poetry of the Minnesingers.—Comparison with that of the Troubadours 83

SPECIMENS.

MINNESINGERS.

Count Conrad of Kirchberg 141
Henry of Rispach, or the Virtuous Clerk 144
Wolfram of Eschenbach 146

page
The Emperor Henry 148
Henry of Morunge 150
Burkhart of Hohenfels 153
Godfrey of Nifen 155
Dietmar of Ast 157
Christian of Hamle 161
Rodolph of Rothenberg 162
The Duke of Anhalt 164
Count Kraft of Toggenburg 165
Steinmar 167
Otho, Margrave of Brandenburg 169
The Chancellor 170
Henry, Duke of Breslau 172
Albert, Marshall of Raprechtsweil 175
Ulrich of Lichtenstein 176
Goesli of Ehenheim 181
The Thuringian 182
Winceslaus, King of Bohemia 183
Lütolt von Seven 185
Watchsongs 186
John Hadloub 193
Walter Vogelweide 196

TROUBADOURS.

The Countess de Die 217
Pons de Capdueil 219
Bernard de Ventadour 222
Folquet de Marseille 226
Bertrand de Born 228
Alphonso II. King of Arragon 236
Arnaud de Marveil 238
Pierre Vidal 240
Pierre d'Auvergne 243
Giraud de Borneil 246
Gaubert Amiels 248

page
Marcabrus 250
Tomiers 253

TROUVÈRES.

Le Chatelain de Coucy 259
Hugues d'Athies 261
Thibaud King of Navarre 262
Gace Brulez 265
Gobin de Reims 266
Raoul Comte de Soissons 267
Jaques de Chison 269
Doete de Troies 271
Barbe de Verrue 273
Paradis d'Amour 275
Fraigne 278
Christine de Pisan 279
Charles Duke of Orleans 286
Jean Froissart 293
Chansons Normands. 295

MASTERSINGERS.

Decline of German poetry from the beginning of the 14th century.—The Mastersingers.—Sing-schools.—The last of the Minnesingers.—Der Chanzler.—Regenbog.—Frauenlob, and his funeral.—The battle of Wartburg.—System and peculiarities of the Mastersingers.—Hans Sachs.—Anonymous ballads and popular songs.—Specimens of the latter 299

PLATES.

Frontispiece.—The tomb of Frauenlob, one of the last of the Minnesingers (see p. 305):—from Görres's Collection of 'Volks und Meister-lieder.'

Wolfram of Eschenbach:—from the MS. of the Minnesingers, usually called the Manesse MS., No. 7266, in the king's library at Paris . . . . . page 24

The battle of Wartburg:—from ditto 83

Conradin:—from ditto 101

Otho, Margrave of Brandenburg:—from ditto . . . 108

Christian of Hamle:—from ditto. This design would seem a fit illustration for the plot of a 'Watchsong' . 161

Albert Marshall of Raprechtsweil:—from ditto . . . 175

The Thuringian:—from ditto 182

Lütolt von Seven:—from ditto 186

Walter Vogelweide:—from ditto 196

The Tower of London:—from a MS in the British Museum (King's MS. 16 F. II.) 286

The Schoolmaster:—prefixed to the poetry of a Minnesinger so called, in the Manesse MS. 299

Lately published,

GERMAN POPULAR STORIES,

Translated from the Kinder und Hausmärchen of M.M. Grimm:

With Etchings by Cruickshank.

A SECOND VOLUME is nearly ready for publication.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY RICHARD TAYLOR, SHOE-LANE.

00043351

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016